Full list of successful examinees for elementary, high school teachers at www.inquirer.net

METRO / A23

Ynares blinks, OKs reopening of Rizal dump

BUSINESS FRIDAY/ B2-1

Chowking goes to UAE, Indonesia, US

ENTERTAINMENT / H1

Toti Fuentes back at the keyboards

Back to Chemistry 101 for Glorietta 2 probers

MADALI SANA KUNG BININTANG NA LANG SA TERORISTA!

By Alcuin Papa

GRIZZLED VETERANS of the Philippine National Police are back in the thick of Chemistry 101.

PNP investigators have found themselves leafing through text-

BACK/ A9

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, October 26, 2007 ★★ 15 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 320 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Binay seeks independent probe of blast

By DJ Yap

MAKATI MAYOR JEJOMAR BINAY YESTERDAY called for an independent investigation of the Oct. 19 explosion at the Glorietta 2 (G2) mall, saying the "conflicting and at times illogical statements" by the Philippine National Police did not "inspire confidence."

Binay said such an inquiry would require the formation of two "reliable, competent and, most importantly, impartial" fact-finding bodies "to help

BINAY SEEKS/ A10

GMA PARDONS ERAP

Cory hopes convicted leader has learned his lesson

By Christine O. Avendaño and Jocelyn R. Uy

JOSEPH ESTRADA WILL be a free man today after President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday granted a pardon to her disgraced predecessor, saving the convicted plunderer from life imprisonment in the national penitentiary.

Critics said Ms Arroyo rushed through the executive clemency just six weeks after Estrada's conviction to curry favor with the opposition and to deflect mounting charges of corruption within her own administration. *(See related story below.)*

"I hereby grant executive clemency to Joseph Ejercito Estrada," acting Executive Secretary Ignacio Bunye said on television at 5:39 p.m. yesterday, quoting from Ms Arroyo's order. "He is hereby restored to his civil and political rights."

Bunye, who is also the press secretary and presidential spokesperson, said the pardon would take effect upon Estrada's acceptance of it.

GMA/ A21

JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, 13th President of the Republic of the Philippines and a plunder convict, is a free man again. PDI FILE PHOTO

FVR warns Gloria: Erap could bring you down

By Cynthia D. Balana and Fe Zamora

FORMER PRESIDENT FIDEL V. RAMOS yesterday warned President Macapagal-Arroyo that the grant of a pardon to convicted plunderer and ousted President Joseph Estrada could lead to her downfall.

"I warn the President not to be hasty," Ramos said in a news conference before his departure for a business conference in China and hours ahead of a Malacañang announcement that Ms Arroyo had granted Estrada executive clemency.

"This thing is bigger than GMA or Erap," Ramos said, using the President's initials and Estrada's populist nickname. "We are stakeholders here, the people of the Philippines."

Ramos, who helped save Ms Arroyo after calls were made for her resignation following claims she stole the 2004 presidential election, also said that the Chief Executive had "little time" to make the country globally competitive.

FVR/ A21

'Saddest moment in the history of Philippine justice'

"THE SADDEST MOMENT IN history as far as justice is concerned."

The No Pardon for Estrada Movement (NOPE) thus condemned President Macapagal-Arroyo's grant of a pardon to ousted President Joseph Estrada, who was convicted of plunder six weeks ago by the Sandiganbayan."

"This is a very bad precedent,

SADDEST / A21

SENATE NBN PROBE

JDV son says GMA behind ZTE deal

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Michael Lim Ubac

BUSINESSMAN JOSE "JOEY" DE VENECIA III yesterday accused President Macapagal-Arroyo of being the force behind China's ZTE Corp. bagging the $329-million contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project, with her husband, brother and cronies led by businessman Enrique Razon Jr. collaborating to seal the deal.

At the resumption of the Senate probe of the ZTE deal, De Venecia also claimed that:

- Ms Arroyo wondered why Romulo Neri, then director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, did not accept early this year the P200-million bribe offered by then Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. in exchange for his endorsement of the ZTE proposal.
- Ms Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, would get $70 million in commission from the ZTE-NBN deal.
- Luis Virata Jr., Nickel Asia majority owner, and Endika Aboitiz, Aboitiz Transport System CEO, had been brokering a peace pact between the President and Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. in the past few weeks.
- Razon and Diosdado "Buboy" Macapagal Jr., the President's brother and ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners managing director, had given him advice on his NBN proposal.

Sen. Mar Roxas was taken aback by De

JDV SON/ A12

Joey's NBN bid illegal, say DOTC execs

By Riza T. Olchondra

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS officials said Jose "Joey" de Venecia III had no business pursuing a priority project such as the National Broadband Network (NBN) with an unsolicited proposal because it was against the law.

"There is a law in the BOT (build-operate-transfer) law which states that priority projects of the government cannot be implemented with unsolicited proposals," Assistant Secretary Lorenzo Formoso told the INQUIRER in a roundtable discussion Wednesday night.

"It has to be solicited, or government-to-government or through a government corporation. AHI (Amsterdam Holdings Inc., De Venecia's company) has lawyers. That is the first thing he should have known," Formoso said.

JOEY'S NBN/ A17

Legal landmark: SC issues 2 writs of amparo

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT YESTERDAY ISsued two writs of amparo a day after the measure went into effect amid mounting concerns over the rising incidence of disappearances and extrajudicial executions since President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power in 2001.

The writs were issued in the cases of missing University of the Philippines students Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan and of brothers Raymond and Reynaldo Manalo who escaped from military detention last month.

The Manalo brothers have said that they saw the UP students while they were being held captive by the military and that they had witnessed the killing of their companion, Manuel Merino.

The respondents in the two cases, who include President Macapagal-Arroyo and military officials, were directed to explain—or file a return—whether they had the students in their custody and answer charges that they had abducted and tortured the brothers.

"In the return, the respondents will say the actions they have taken, their

LEGAL/ A9

Inquirer bags 8 Catholic mass media awards

WE'RE NO. 1: INQUIRER winners of the Catholic Mass Media Awards capture the moment with the paper's executives. From left, correspondent Nestor Burgos Jr., reporter Alcuin Papa, desk editor Leti Boniol, PDI chair Marixi Prieto, Readers' Advocate Lorna Kalaw-Tirol, reporter Volt Contreras and photographer Edwin Bacasmas. ROMY HOMILLADA

By Volt Contreras

NEARLY SWEEPING ALL THE CATegories in which it was nominated, the Philippine Daily Inquirer last night bagged six top honors and two special citations in the 29th Catholic Mass Media Awards.

The most awarded print organization in CMMA's 2007 edition pulled off the rare feat with its reports on the Guimaras oil spill and the dismal state of Philippine education; a dramatic photograph of Mayon Volcano as the backdrop for victims of Typhoon "Reming"; an editorial cartoon on the rights of the child, and two engaging

INQUIRER/ A21

EDWIN BACASMAS' winning photo titled "Father and Child."

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon and Visayas will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	**Zamboanga**	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	**Davao**	Partly Cloudy

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Second FrontPage

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Mid-Day **SUERTRES** Evening

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GMA touched by 'cabalen's' visit

Pampanga execs assure her of unwavering support despite scandals

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **SOLDIERS** in alleged Feb. coup axed /A4
- **YOUNG STUDES** show soldiers they care /A7
- **RP-MADE** solar car leads in Australia race /A8
- **OFWS: SAUDIS** tortured us into admitting 'chop-chop' murders /A11
- **RP LAYS OUT** welcome mat for Russian tourists /A18

By Michael Lim Ubac

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO WAS TEARY-eyed when close to a thousand local officials from Pampanga trooped yesterday to Malacañang to pledge their unwavering support for her scandal-wracked administration.

"She almost cried," said Candaba Mayor Gerry Pelayo, after Ms Arroyo was handed a manifesto of support from officials of her province.

"She may have been touched by what we said that, 'every time there's a problem, Malacañang is always blamed for it, isn't it?'" Pelayo said.

He said the Pampanga officials wondered why the beneficiaries of administration programs in Manila and the countryside were not coming to the defense of the President.

"No one is talking about the good deeds of the President," said Pelayo, repeating what the Pampanga officials told the President.

The Pampanga officials led by Vice Gov. Joseller "Yeng" Guiao included provincial board members, 21 mayors, vice mayors, city and municipal councilors and barangay captains.

At a press conference later, they assailed Pampanga Gov. Ed Panlilio as they joined the League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP) in defending the legality of the distribution of cash to governors and congressmen on Oct. 11 in Malacañang.

They called on Panlilio not to return the P500,000 he received in Malacañang but to spend it on community projects, instead.

The manifesto, which Guiao read, pledged "unequivocal and unquestionable loyalty and support to the administration." It said the Pampanga officials saw "apparent efforts to destroy the credibility and leadership of … President Arroyo through various means of black propaganda."

They said that no amount of criticism could take away the credit from her for bringing "unprecedented heights in business activity not only in Pampanga but in the entire country."

"The people of Pampanga, grateful for all the sacrifices she has done for the Kapampangans in general, are united in appreciating her as the second Kapampangan president after her beloved father, the late and famous President Diosdado P. Macapagal," they said.

Guiao said the joint manifesto was signed by "all mayors, vice mayors, councilors and barangay captains" on Oct. 22 in San Fernando City.

Own initiative

"All of us—on our own initiative—went to Malacañang to show the province's support … for President Macapagal-Arroyo," said Guiao in Filipino, who admitted, however, that the elected local officials were deeply indebted to the President.

Guiao said it was not just the alleged bribery of governors and congressmen by President Arroyo that prompted them to troop to Malacañang.

LOCAL Pampanga officials led by Vice Gov. Yeng Guiao (center) hold up their manifesto of support for President Arroyo signed by more than 700 of their colleagues. LYN RILLON

"There are a lot of issues besides that. Whatever the issues are, we don't want to make a judgment on any of those issues. We are just expressing our support to the President, who is our province mate," he said.

Kapampangans have been losing sleep over the problems the President is facing, said Pelayo in Filipino.

"And we told her, 'we are saddened, as Kapampangans, (about the attacks on the President),'" he said, pointing out that Ms Arroyo has been a workaholic President.

"It's always Malacañang's fault. But now we showed that the President is not alone in solving her woes," he said.

Capitol turned into church

Pelayo accused Panlilio of "ruling" the province without due consultation with the mayors and other officials.

"We showed to the President that what Governor Panlilio did … he alone made that decision. As you can see … he was the one left in Pampanga," said Pelayo.

"He turned the capitol into a parish Church and he's the parish priest … and he's ruling the parochia (parish)," added Pelayo.

Also yesterday, Rep. Teofisto Guingona III said the money Panlilio received in Malacañang had come from a Bank of Commerce branch in Pampanga, based on the markings on the cash wrappers.

He said he planned to file a complaint before the Anti-Money Laundering Council to force the bank to identify the owner of the account from which the money was drawn.

The League of Provinces of the Philippines has said it was the source of the money given to Panlilio under its "capability building program." *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

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Traders, religious, scholars seek probe of cash gifts

By Daxim Lucas

A GROUP OF BUSINESSMEN, CLERICS and academics yesterday tagged the handing out by Malacañang of cash gifts to government officials as proof of the "endemic corruption" in politics and called for an independent inquiry into the matter.

In a press statement, the group, which includes Coalition Against Corruption chair Jose L. Cuisia Jr. and Bishop-Businessmen's Conference national cochair Vicente Paterno, urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to create an independent commission "composed of people whose reputation for integrity and independence are unquestioned" to investigate the incident.

The independent commission should "look into the claims of the League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP), ascertain where the money actually came from, and why such a thing could occur," the group said. "The results should immediately be released to the public," it added.

Two weeks after the bribery scandal erupted, the LPP stepped forward to claim that it was behind the distribution of the cash gifts.

The group, which also includes members of the influential Makati Business Club, said the creation of the commission was one way President Arroyo could improve her public image.

It added that the Anti-Money Laundering Council should take action and look into the alleged bribery attempt that occurred in Malacañang.

"How the President handles this controversy will either give credence to her claims that she is serious about fighting corruptions" or further feed the thinking that corruption continues in high places, the group said.

Other signatories to the statement were ranking officials of Dilaab and Barug Pilipino, Transparency and Accountability Network, CODE-NGO, the Cebu Business Club and the Foundation for Academic Freedom.

Joker trumpets 'vindication'

SEN. JOKER ARROYO SAID HE FELT VINdicated when none of his colleagues during yesterday's Senate hearing on the controversial National Broadband Network (NBN) project came out in support of the INQUIRER's report on the Sept. 26 executive session with key witness Romulo Neri.

At the resumption of the hearing on the NBN yesterday, Arroyo challenged his fellow senators to affirm the INQUIRER's story that Arroyo had "intervened" before Neri, the former head of the National Economic and Development Authority, could reveal more about President Macapagal-Arroyo's role in the allegedly anomalous $329-million NBN project.

The INQUIRER, quoting four anonymous sources, reported that Neri was "on the verge" of revealing Ms Arroyo's instructions to him concerning the NBN deal with China's ZTE Corp. when Arroyo reportedly made a motion to allow Neri to avail himself of legal counsel.

After the Arroyo motion, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya joined the closed-door session to act as Neri's lawyer. Andaya's presence was what supposedly stopped Neri from testifying, according to one of the sources.

"I'm happy, it's a vindication. None of them affirmed the INQUIRER story. That's good enough for me. I asked them frontally," Arroyo told reporters.

"As far as I'm concerned I feel vindicated on national TV," he added.

The administration senator demanded that the Senate investigate the senators and other officials for the breach of the strict confidentiality rule of executive sessions.

Sen. Alan Cayetano, chair of the Senate blue ribbon committee that is leading the joint inquiry into the NBN deal, yesterday said the senators would discuss the issue of an investigation during a caucus.

Dona Z. Pazzibugan

North Luzon bishops want GMA to stay

ANOTHER GROUP OF CATHOLIC BIshops, this time from Northern Luzon, has bucked the call made by three other bishops for President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign over the alleged bribery of governors and congressmen in Malacañang.

In a statement, Tuguegarao Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan said 12 bishops from the North had prayed together and discussed the issue and had agreed not to support the call made by three bishops from Luzon for Ms Arroyo to step down.

"We, twelve bishops, after praying and discussing the problem, believe the alleged bribery between Malacañang and some government officials is an issue that has to be primarily resolved in the sphere of temporal affairs, particularly politics. Thus, we are not in a position to render judgment on the veracity of the matter," Talamayan said.

"Therefore, as ministers of the Church, it is not our prerogative to support the call for the President's resignation. However, as pastors, it is our duty to look after the moral life of the faithful. Therefore, we welcome the idea that a thorough investigation should be done in order for the truth to prevail," Talamayan said.

The statement came after 18 bishops from Mindanao, led by Butuan Bishop Juan de Dios Pueblos, had expressed their opposition to the call of the three bishops from Luzon for the President to resign after her administration had been rocked by one controversy after another.

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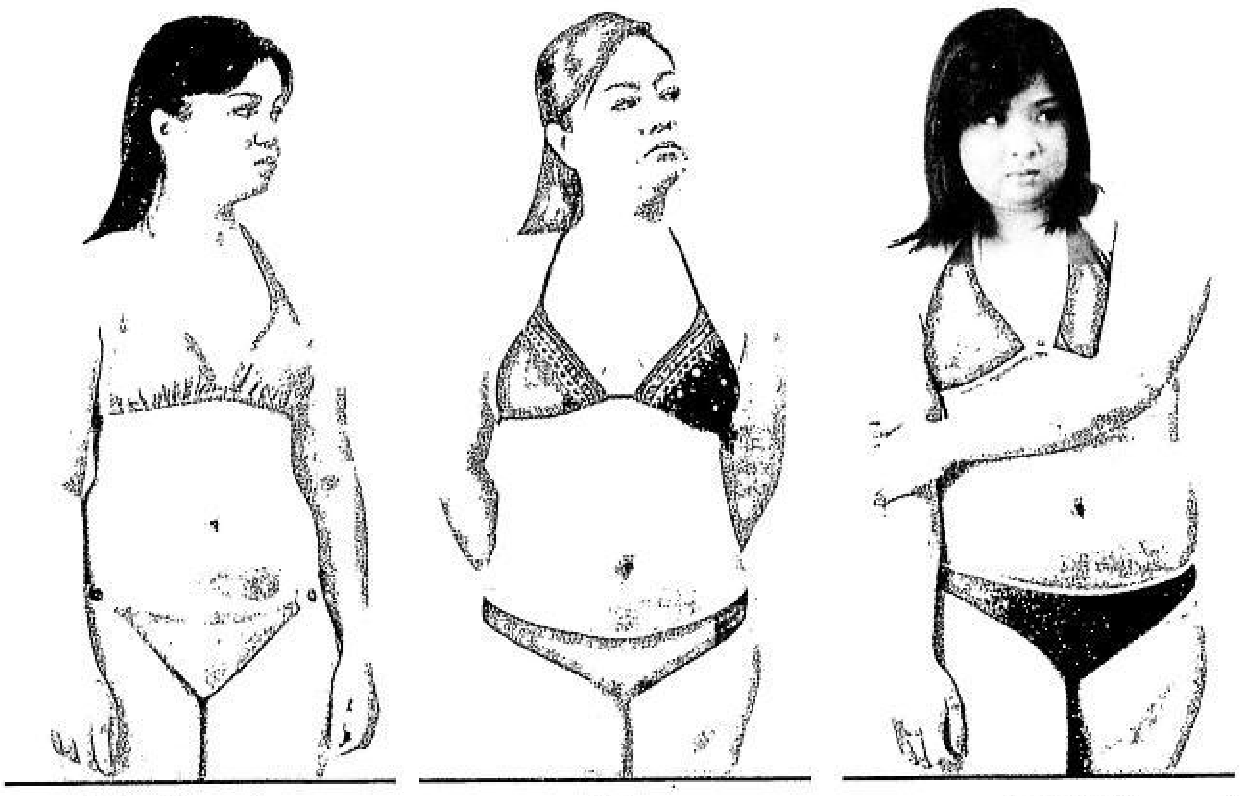

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marie france

Soldiers in alleged Feb. coup try get the boot

By Nikko Dizon

DETAINED FOR OVER A YEAR WITHout formal charges, 26 of the 40 elite Army Scout Ranger enlisted personnel implicated in the February 2006 alleged coup attempt were dishonorably discharged from the service on Wednesday on orders of Philippine Army chief Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano.

"They are discharged administratively from the military service and released from detention effective 24 October 2007," Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres told reporters late Wednesday afternoon.

He said there was a "continuing investigation" of the case against the 14 remaining enlisted personnel who had been detained at Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, together with the 28 Marine and Scout Ranger officers tagged as the leaders of the February coup plot.

The officers are led by former Marine Commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda, ex-Army Scout Ranger commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and Medal of Valor awardee Marine Col. Ariel Querubin.

Torres said Yano's decision came after a review of the separate recommendations made by the Army Inspector General and the ad hoc investigating team led by then Armed Forces Inspector General Rufino Lopez.

Their discharge from the service caught the 26 soldiers by surprise, according to Lim's lawyer, Vicente Verdadero.

Verdadero fumed over Yano's decision. He has been assisting the soldiers since they were transferred from Camp Capinpin to Army headquarters at Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, on Wednesday afternoon.

"It's a blatant violation of their human rights," Verdadero told reporters in a phone interview.

"Based on that summary investigation, they came out with the discharge but my question is this – the very cardinal question is this – why just now, after more than a year? Why not immediately after the investigation," Verdadero said.

He also questioned the basis for the soldiers' discharge.

Verdadero said the 26 soldiers were "following a legitimate order from their operations officer," referring to Maj. Oriel Pangcog, and an order from Army headquarters.

Pangcog was briefly detained at Camp Capinpin but was eventually cleared by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. in November last year.

Based in Bicol, the soldiers were stopped at a checkpoint in Sipocot, Camarines Sur, while allegedly on their way to Manila to join antigovernment forces at the Edsa Shrine on Feb. 24, the 20th anniversary of the 1986 People Power revolt.

Torres said the Inspectors General had recommended the discharge of the soldiers based on a "preponderance of evidence" that showed they had violated Articles of War 67 (mutiny) and 97 (conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline).

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PARTNERS FOR NATURE. The World Wide Fund for Nature, WWF-Philippines president Dave Valdes (left) presents to Samir Cairae, president of LaFarge, and Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, president of Ayala Corp., the Energy Assessment Study for the Philippines that was funded by LaFarge and supervised by WWF. WWF recently celebrated Partners Night to recognize its donors conservation and corporate partnerships in business and sustainability.

RODEL ROTONI

Soldiers given bigger poll role

MORE SOLDIERS will be fielded for the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) elections on Oct. 29.

While the Commission on Elections expects a relatively peaceful election, the poll body has decided to expand the role of the military in the village polls in order to tap its resources and manpower.

Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento said in an interview the poll agency had set aside a memorandum of agreement with the AFP that served to limit the military's role during the midterm elections.

He said the Comelec opted to set the MOA aside and fully deputize the military for the elections after it found the restrictions impractical.

For example, Sarmiento said, the MOA only allowed the Comelec to use the military's resources in the event of armed threats. Also, the Comelec would have to go through a long process should they need to use AFP resources such as vehicles.

"We found it impractical and time is of the essence during elections," Sarmiento said.

With the MOA set aside, Sarmiento said the AFP and the Philippine National Police would both be at the forefront of providing assistance to the electorate and the Comelec during the barangay election.

Sarmiento said the barangay election would also serve as the a litmus test for the Comelec's plan to eventually give the military a bigger role in future polls. *Beverly T. Natividad*

World's Chinese entrepreneurs set next meet in RP

IT WILL BE THE PHILIPPINES' TURN TO host the World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention (WCEC) after 16 years.

The long wait ended at a ceremony last month in Kobe, Japan, where more than 1,330 delegates, including 90 Chinese-Filipinos, brought the 9th WCEC to a successful close and witnessed the turnover rites for the 10th WCEC scheduled in Manila in November 2009.

Japan-Chinese Chamber of Commerce president Huang Yao Ting turned over the WCEC banner to Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano, who was accompanied by 10th WCEC overall chair Lucio Tan, vice chair John K. Tan and national organizing committee chair Ambassador Francis Chua.

The ceremony was witnessed by former President Fidel V. Ramos, who delivered a message as the special guest.

Discover the Philippines

Durano invited the delegates to join the 10th WCEC and, in the process, discover the Philippines' rich culture and history and explore trade and investment opportunities.

While marketing Philippine destinations, Durano is also promoting investments in tourism in an effort to raise the industry's capacity to accommodate the targeted five million foreign arrivals by 2010. Substantial investments are expected to come from thousands of overseas Chinese who will join the 10th WCEC.

Held every other year, the WCEC is an international conference founded by the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry to provide a forum for economic cooperation and understanding among overseas Chinese and business communities worldwide.

Nine WCECs have been held across the Asia Pacific—Singapore in 1991, Hong Kong in 1993, Thailand in 1995, Canada in 1997, Australia in 1999, China in 2001, Malaysia in 2003, Korea in 2005, and Japan this year.

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Corrections

IN THE OCT. 23 ISSUE, a Lifestyle story on Page C4—"Worthwhile national investment"—mistakenly attributed to Eric Tayag of the Philippine Foundation for Vaccination some statements stressing the importance of vaccination against invasive pneumococcus disease. The statements were made by Jaime Santos, chair of the Division of Infectious Diseases of the Philippine Children's Medical Center.

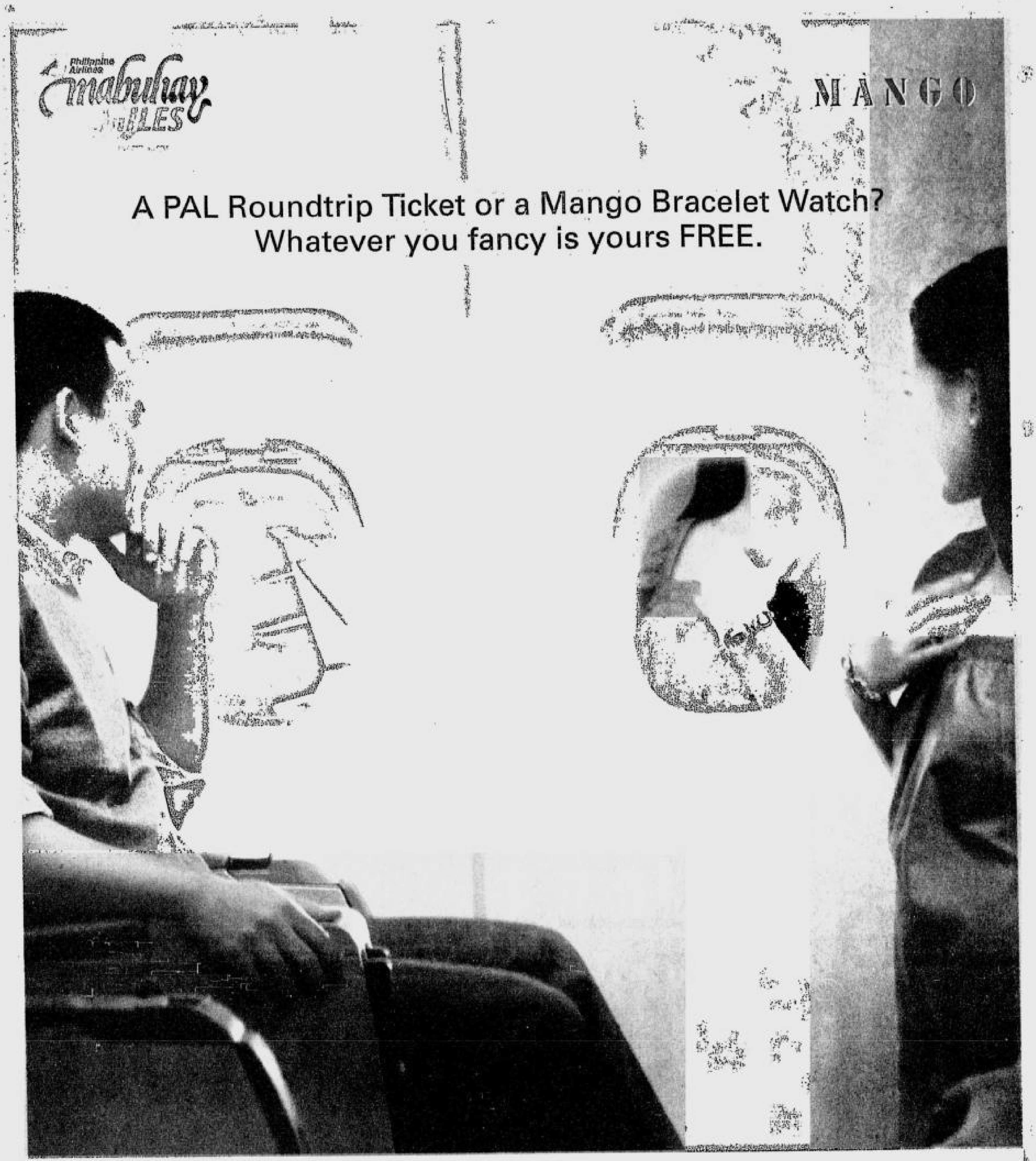
* * *

IN THE SAME STORY, a caption on Page C3 erroneously identified the person shown in the photo as Eric Tayag. The person in the photo was Jaime Santos.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.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Studes show soldiers they care

Touching letters boost troop morale

By Nikko Dizon

IT WAS A PACKAGE THAT THE ARMED Forces of the Philippines did not expect to receive—870 letters of support written by young elementary school students and 1,509 light blue-colored rosaries especially made by a family in Iloilo City for Filipino soldiers in the field fighting to defend the country.

"I've been with the AFP for a long time and this is the first time that I've seen something like this," said Army Maj. Ramon Zagala, deputy chief of the AFP Public Information Office, as he read out some of the letters written by students from Assumption College in Iloilo City.

One young girl wrote: "Always pray before going to battle."

"It's heartwarming for the soldiers to receive these letters ... These letters will boost the morale of our soldiers," Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro, the PIO chief, told reporters.

Bacarro said the letters would be distributed to soldiers in Basilan, Jolo and Tawi-Tawi, and even those stationed in Luzon and the Visayas.

Admiration for courage

Adding his two cents' worth, Zagala, the deputy PIO, suggested some of the letters be given to the wounded soldiers now confined at the V. Luna Medical Center in Quezon City.

Written in English and Filipino, the letters expressed the young students' admiration for the soldiers' courage.

Some had drawings of the Philippine flag, children saluting soldiers, even butterflies and flowers.

Many of the letters indicated that the children were aware that soldiers had to leave their families behind, and even sacrifice their lives, to protect the country.

Not a few called the soldiers "heroes."

"I really wanted to go there and help you fight, but I am just a child. All I can do to help you is pray," read a neatly scripted letter from a girl named Athena, which included a prayer at the end.

"I hope you would keep this letter. And always smile," she said.

TV show started it

The letters and rosaries came after Emma Concepcion, a 55-year-old office employee in Iloilo City, watched the special episode of the noontime show "Wowowee" that was dedicated to the soldiers at the height of the military offensive against the Abu Sayyaf extremists in August and September.

A number of junior officers and soldiers were killed in the offensive.

"The loss of lives touched me," Concepcion told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Concepcion, the older sister of award-winning actor Joel Torre, said watching the bereaved families on television inspired her to do something for the soldiers.

She thought of making the rosaries, assisted by her househelp, and her grandchild's nanny.

Money for food

Concepcion said she also spoke to Assumption College's Mother Superior and suggested that the children could do something for the soldiers.

Concepcion said she was surprised when she received a box full of letters written by the pupils.

And more admirably, some of the youngsters went beyond writing words of encouragement. A number of them enclosed P20, P50 and P100 bills in their letters for the soldiers' food.

Little Adeline Bermejo, a prep student, gave P13, consisting of two P5 coins and three P1 coins.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, October 26, 2007
29th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Rom 7:18-25
Gospel: Luke 12:54-59

Jesus said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once: 'A shower is coming.' And so it happens. And when the wind blows from the south, you say: 'It will be hot'; and so it is. You superficial people! You understand the signs of the earth and the sky, but you don't understand the present times.

"And why do you not judge for yourselves what is fit? When you go with your accuser before the court, try to settle the case on the way, lest he drag you before the judge and the judge deliver you to the jailer, and the jailer throw you in prison. I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the very last penny."

Commentary

Paul often does what he doesn't want to do, and doesn't do what he wants to do. He does not accept the grace and power of God to be conformed to the life of God within him, instead, he reverts back to his old ways. He is wretched and asks who can free him from this wretched body under the power of death. Often Paul sounds like he has forgotten the incarnation and that our bodies are holy, and it is not a question of being freed from our bodies but remembering that God dwells in them. We are the temple and dwelling place of God in the world. We are at home in God, the Trinity, by baptism and we must not let our feelings and old beliefs pull us into looking at what God has made in a negative way.

We must read the signs of the times religiously through the eyes of God. We can read the weather signs and interpret the portents of heaven and earth but we are not so astute at reading what is just and good. We had better learn how to be just and forgiving with one another or the courts of the world will do their form of justice on us and we will pay. How do we live with one another as Christians? Do we resort to courts of law and betray the power of God in Jesus in us by baptism?

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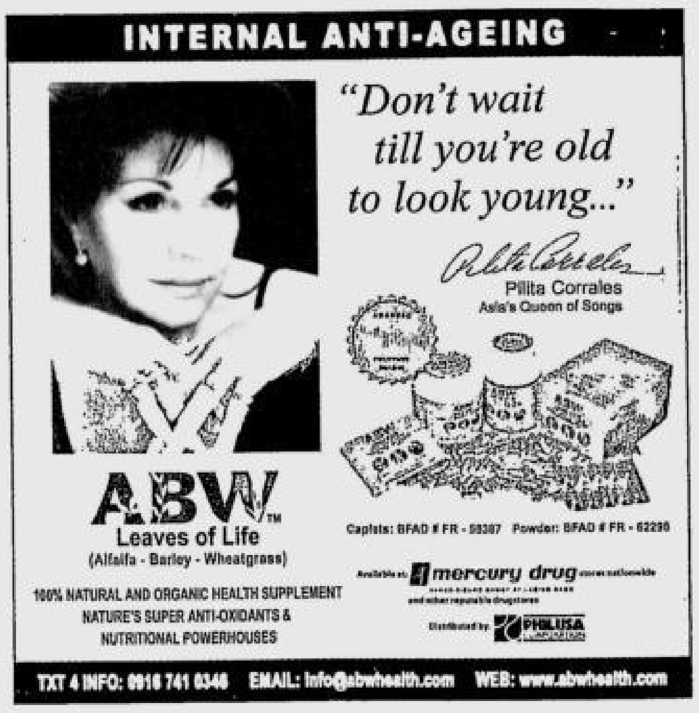
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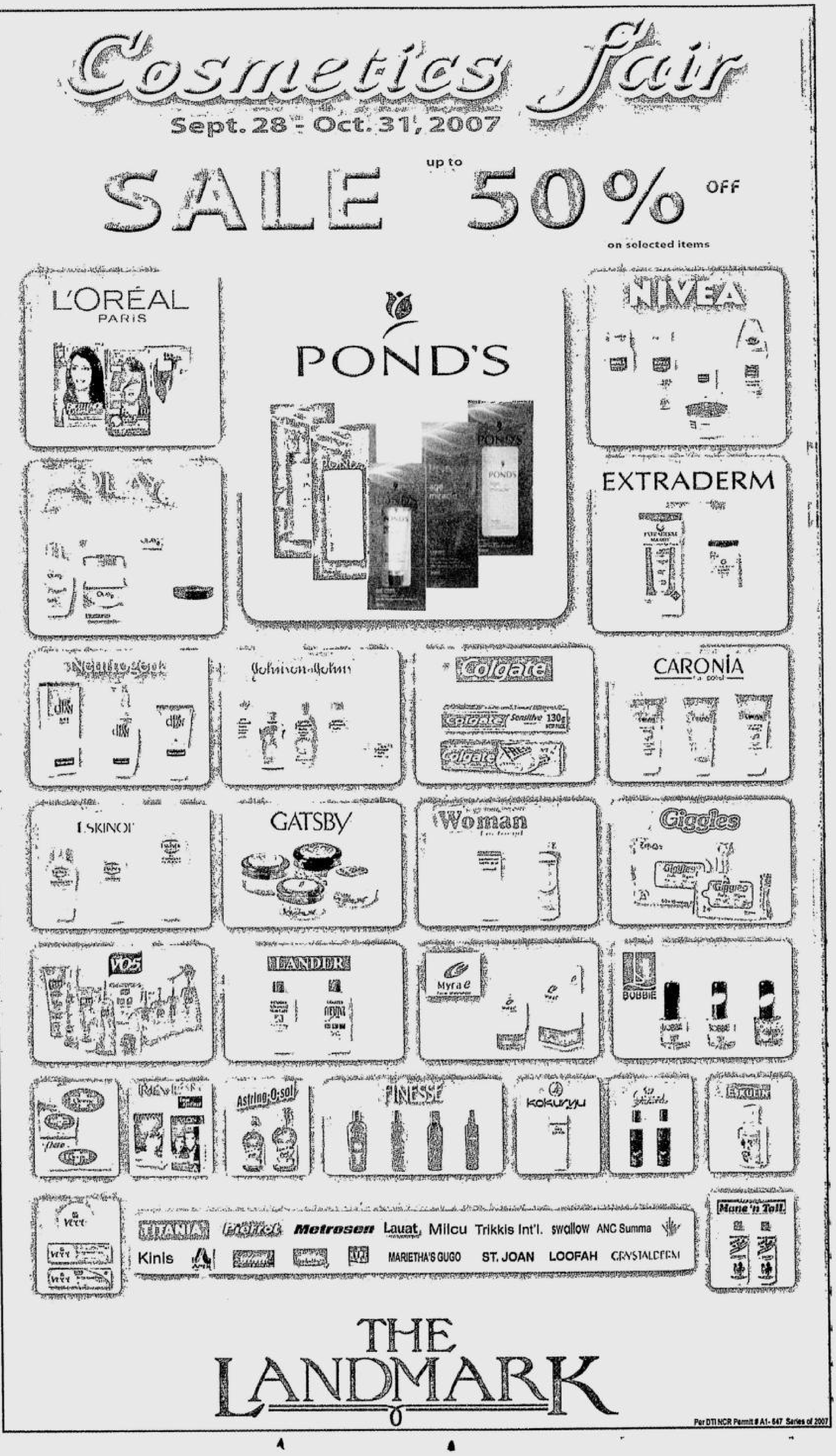
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RP solar car leads class in Australia

SINAG, THE PHILIPPINES' first fully functional solar car, has reached the halfway point of the 3,000-kilometer stretch of the World Solar Challenge being held in central Australia.

After breaching the 2,000-km distance from Darwin to Cadney Homestead yesterday, SINAG jumped to 11th place but continued to maintain the lead in the Challenge Class of the race, consisting of about 40 participants, according to a press statement from the SINAG team.

The World Solar Challenge is a solar powered-car race over 3,021 km through central Australia from Darwin to Adelaide.

A solar car is an electric vehicle powered by solar energy obtained from solar panels on the surface of the car. Photovoltaic (PV) cells convert the sun's energy directly into electrical energy.

The race, which started on Oct. 21, has attracted teams from around the world, most of which are fielded by governments or corporations keen to promote the development of alternative energy technology, and universities to develop their students' engineering and technological skills.

Teachers, students built it

The SINAG solar car was designed and built by a group of faculty members and students from the mechanical engineering and the electronics and communications engineering departments of De La Salle University, with support from Ford Phil., Motolite, Philippine Airlines, San Miguel Corp, Shell, SunPower, U-Freight and Ventus.

According to SINAG's technical team, the solar car has been performing better than expected since the start of the race.

SINAG was easily able to surpass the 1,000-km mark without needing to rely on auxiliary power, an option which, although allowed by contest rules, would result in a reduction of the team's overall score, the team said.

Though it encountered a minor problem with the brake system which caused the car's tires to wear out faster, Team SINAG has experienced no major technical difficulties and has more than made up for lost time, the statement said.

"We are making good time so we can make it to Adelaide by Saturday or early Sunday morning," said lead driver Eric Tan.

"We just need to reach the next designated control stops before the deadline in order for us to be able to continue to race. Missing two control stops will disqualify us," said Tan.

Last two stops

Today, SINAG will make its way to the last two control centers in Glen Dambo and Port Augusta, before the finish of the race in Adelaide.

The La Salle students have been feeling triumphant after the solar car they built has been performing better than the other entrants.

"Whether or not we finish this race, we feel we've already accomplished our goal of building a working solar car and letting people at home know that solar power is a viable and reliable source of energy," said Robert Obiles, the student team leader.

"Plus, this has been one great big adventure," he said.

CELEBRATING WOMEN ACHIEVERS

Known for its flagship search programs like the Search for Outstanding Teachers (SOT), Country's Outstanding Policemen in Service (COPS) and The Outstanding Philippine Soldiers (TOPS), Metrobank Foundation strengthens its excellence awards program with its participation in the search for Outstanding Women in Nation's Service (TOWNS), a joint project with the TOWNS Foundation and Metrobank Card Corporation.

Established in 1974, the TOWNS award is presented to Filipino women aged 21 to 45 years old, whose public and private pursuits have made a significant impact on her community, field of expertise, and the country's economic, social and cultural development. The TOWNS Award has since been conferred to 84 outstanding women professionals, and they are joined this year by an equally illustrious set of winners from various fields: Dina Ocampo, Education; Catherine Vistro-Yu, Education; Glecy Cruz Atienza, Arts and Culture; Eva Maria Cutiongco-de la Paz, Medicine; Hilly Ann Maria Roa-Quiaoit, Environmental Conservation; Elizabeth Lee, Business; Maria Corazon de Ungria, Science; Alexandra Prieto Romualdez, Media; and Maria Ressa, Media.

This year marks the first time that Metrobank Foundation served as the technical resource partner of the TOWNS Search, an initiative that institutionalizes the Foundation's involvement with the TOWNS Foundation, starting in 1998. The Foundation also made possible the engagement of the Metrobank Card Corporation as a major sponsor of the Search.

"As an institution that advocates excellence and the triumph of the Filipino, Metrobank Foundation considers it an honor and a challenge to help conduct the TOWNS Search using the judging process that we have refined and developed in our more than twenty years of managing excellence awards programs," notes president Aniceto Sobrepeña.

The 2007 TOWNS awardees were honored recently in a special audience with President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in Malacañan Palace. A gala reception will also be hosted by the TOWNS Foundation, Metrobank Card Corporation and Metrobank Foundation, Inc. in Dusit Hotel, Makati City.

The Metrobank Foundation is the corporate social responsibility arm of the Metrobank Group. Over the last 28 years, it has promoted a culture of excellence among Filipinos through its various programs notably the Search for Outstanding Teachers, the Metrobank Art and Design Excellence, The Outstanding Philippine Soldiers, the Country's Outstanding Policemen in Service, the Metrobank Math Challenge, and the College Scholarship Program. The Foundation also has a grants program that assists NGOs and the government in the fields of education, healthcare, and the arts. Metrobank Foundation celebrates Filipino excellence and presents wellsprings of hope in the future of our nation.

METROBANK FOUNDATION and METROBANK CARD CORPORATION

Honors

The Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS)

Dina Ocampo, Ph.D
Education
Early childhood educator and sole researcher on dyslexia and learning difficulties in the country.

Catherine Vistro-Yu, Ed.D
Education
Prime mover of the Basic School Mathematics Curriculum and Framework for Mathematics Teachers Education

Glecy Cruz Atienza, Ph.D
Arts and Culture
Multi-awarded playwright and artist who uses theater as a pedagogical force for shaping the youth

Eva Maria Cutiongco-de la Paz, MD
Medicine
One of five medical geneticists in the Philippines and prime mover of the Philippine Birth Defects Registry Project

Hilly Ann Maria Roa-Quiaoit, Dr. Rerum Naturalium
Environmental Conservation
Known internationally for her work in giant clam conservation and locally for institutionalizing coastal resource management in Northern Mindanao

Alyssa Peleo-Alampay, Ph.D
Science
Made earth science more accessible to the public through the establishment of the NIGS Geology Museum, youth camps, career talks and the like

Elizabeth Lee
Business
As first woman president of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers in the Philippines, she successfully lobbied against smuggled second-hand vehicles

Maria Corazon de Ungria, Ph.D
Science
A forensic scientist whose research has led to DNA legislation and the development of the sexual assault investigation kit for the Child Protection Unit

Maria Ressa
Broadcast Media
Award winning international journalist currently initiating a culture of transparency and accountability in Philippine broadcast journalism.

Alexandra Prieto Romualdez
Print Media
Institutionalized major policies that strengthened the Inquirer's credibility and readability and established the publication's corporate citizenship programs

Partners for Women Empowerment

The Metrobank Foundation and the TOWNS Foundation started working together in 1998 when Metrobank Foundation agreed to be a major sponsor of the TOWNS Foundation's continuous search for excellence among Filipino women. Even then, the Metrobank Foundation, known for its recognition program for teachers, artists, and public servants such as policemen and soldiers, believed that it should also recognize the contribution of women in nation building.

Nine years later, this partnership between the two foundations was solidified through the institutionalization of Metrobank Foundation's involvement as technical resource in the search for the country's outstanding women. Aside from sharing with TOWNS Foundation the evaluation and selection process derived from its established excellence programs, Metrobank Foundation also facilitated the participation of Metrobank Card Corporation, a subsidiary of the Metrobank Group, as a major sponsor of the Search. As a corporation which believes in the advocacies that advance the cause of women, the Metrobank Card Corporation supports the TOWNS Foundation in championing the role and contributions of Filipino women in nation building.

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It's back to Chem 101 for probers

From page A1

books and combing the Internet to bone up on high school and college chemistry in the wake of the explosion at the Glorietta 2 mall on Oct. 19.

At a meeting with INQUIRER reporters and editors on Wednesday, Chief Supt. Luizo Ticman, director of the Southern Police District and head of the Multi-Agency Investigation Task Force looking into the blast, took pains to explain how methane might have been involved.

Later, he joked: "Well, that explanation should be good for [a grade of] 76."

Ticman said information had been free-flowing for police investigators because "people from different disciplines"—such as chemists as well as arson, metallurgic and petrochemical experts—were part of the task force.

Info overload

Director Geary Barias, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, said the police were learning so many things from the Glorietta explosion, including chemistry, the law on criminal negligence, and how to handle crisis situations.

"It's Chemistry 101 all over again. I think I have information overload," he told the INQUIRER, adding that he had had to go online to do research on methane and other deadly gases.

Barias' job appears doubly hard because he has been named police spokesperson on matters related to the explosion.

"I have to understand [the information], digest it, so it will be understandable to the public," he said.

But Barias does not seem to mind the crash course: "I'm learning a lot of things. We have to be thorough and accurate in our investigation. It also helps in explaining things to our people and media friends."

Back to school

Bomb investigators are also going back to school, so to speak.

According to a police investigator, an American explosives expert recently conducted a seminar on gas blasts for members of Explosive Ordnance Division units in Metro Manila.

Police officials said this was part of the cooperation being extended by foreign governments to the PNP.

Israeli security expert says Glorietta 2 damage 'typical of a gas blast'

By Julie M. Aurelio

AN ISRAELI SECURITY AND ANTITERROR expert yesterday described the damage at the Glorietta 2 (G2) basement as "typical of a gas blast."

David Nevo of the private Israeli security firm Coral Integrated Security Systems Ltd. (Coraliss) said the damage to the basement floor and ceiling, as well as the diesel tank, pointed to the possibility that the blast was not caused by an explosive or a bomb.

Nevo, whose group was in Manila in connection with an airport inspection, said he was basing his observations on a visit to the G2 basement on Tuesday.

He said he made the visit as an independent observer, and that he was not privy to the results of the lab tests on the sample residues found at the site.

"To my impression... it's more likely that it was a gas explosion because of the type of damage [in the basement]," Nevo said.

He said, however, that he did not share his observations with the police.

Nevo described the G2 basement as "all blasted up."

"I think there was a leak of gas inside the basement... In a closed volume, when dangerous gases mix together with oxygen, and then you have a spark, that can destroy a whole building... It is also possible that it can be more powerful than a bomb," Nevo said.

He noted that five days after the blast, police had yet to recover any trace of an explosive or components of a bomb from the site.

"Usually, you can find traces of explosives in samples, even small traces," he said.

Nevo serves as a managing director at Coraliss. He is a retired chief superintendent with more than 25 years of experience in security and antiterror management.

Legal landmark: High court issues 2 writs of amparo

From page A1

defenses, and the action they will take," said Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez.

The high tribunal also directed the Court of Appeals to hold hearings on the two petitions for a writ of amparo on Nov. 8 at 2 p.m.

In the case of Empeño, Cadapan and Merino, the return—or explanation—should be filed on or before Nov. 6 at 2 p.m. In the Manalo brothers' case, the return should be filed within five working days from the service of the writ.

The high court ordered the petition for a writ of amparo filed by Cadapan and Empeño's mothers to be consolidated with their pending petition for a writ of habeas corpus with the Court of Appeals.

Swift decision ordered

The tribunal also said the case of the missing students should be decided 10 days after its submission for decision.

The mothers of Cadapan and Empeño had also sought a protection order to stop the respondents from harming their daughters and Merino, who were allegedly abducted in June last year.

The mothers also said that if the three were already dead, the military should be directed to reveal where the bodies were buried. Should the military deny custody, the mothers asked that nine places, including military camps, be inspected.

The respondents should also be directed to release reports about the three missing persons, the mothers added.

In the case of the Manalo brothers, the high court granted their earlier plea into a petition for a writ of amparo. The brothers in August had then asked the high court to stop the military from arresting them after their escape from a yearlong detention and to place them under the magistrates' protective custody.

Independent inquiry asked

The Manalo brothers also requested that an independent commissioner be appointed to examine Raymond's statement about their ordeal, as well as to investigate the places where they had been detained, which reportedly include military camps.

A day after the filing of the brothers' petition in August, the high court issued a temporary restraining order stopping the military from arresting them. Marquez said that the TRO remains effective until further notice.

Named respondents in the brothers' petition are the defense secretary and the Armed Forces chief of staff.

Special en banc session

The Supreme Court justices are on recess, but they held a special en banc session yesterday because of the urgency of the petition, Marquez said.

The writ of amparo was issued by the high court as a response to the problem of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. Leftist groups said more than 800 Filipinos have been victims of political killings. (The INQUIRER count is 300.)

The writ of amparo removes from officials and other respondents the defense of denial, a problem that has resulted in the dismissal of habeas corpus cases for missing persons. The writ also demands more action and accountability from the respondents.

In issuing the writ of amparo, the Supreme Court invoked its power under the 1987 Constitution to promulgate rules to protect constitutional rights.

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Binay seeks independent probe of blast

From page A1

make sense of what happened."

He said one would "look into the real cause of the explosion," and the other, "assess the response of the government to the incident, and determine if the chain of command was followed."

"The people are looking for a conclusive and credible result," Binay said. "As things stand, people remain highly skeptical [of] the PNP findings."

Police investigators are leaning toward the theory that the explosion was an industrial accident that killed 11 people and injured more than 100.

They said a combination of methane gas from sewage pipes and diesel fumes from a tank, both located in the G2 basement, could have triggered the explosion—a claim disputed by property owner Ayala Land Inc. (ALI), which said the conditions at the basement could not have led to such a massive blast.

"Malacañang has already made a public statement that this explosion was caused by a gas leak," Binay said, adding:

"Can we expect the underlings to say otherwise, even if the investigation is far from conclusive?

"If the head says it's white, won't the subordinates also say it's white?"

Welcome, but...

PNP Director General Avelino Razon said independent experts were welcome, but pointed out that the police were on top of the probe.

"We welcome that, but we want to remind you that the PNP is mandated to investigate and recommend appropriate actions relative to this investigation," he said.

Apparently slighted by the doubts cast on the PNP's capability, Razon said his agency was being assisted by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Australian Federal Police and, lately, by Israeli bomb experts.

He told reporters that the PNP had even sought the help of petrochemical and metallurgical experts. "So [what other] independent experts [are needed]?"

Asked whether the PNP findings would hold despite the entry of independent and foreign experts, Razon replied in the affirmative.

"We invite chemical experts to have a look [at the site]," he said.

He added that police had secured all "physical evidence" found there, including 19 truckloads of wastewater taken from the G2 basement.

Razon said the PNP remained convinced that a gas explosion had occurred. He said even the foreign experts had not found anything to prove that a bomb had caused the explosion.

Nevertheless, he said, police were not entirely ruling out the bomb angle.

Razon said the public should have faith in the PNP.

"We can only go after the truth, evidence. We can't proceed against conjectures, against opinion," he said. "It's taking us a long time because we want to be circumspect and thorough."

Politics

Reacting to statements made by Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol and Chief Supt. Luizo Ticman that they would look into the liability of ALI and Makati City Hall should it be proven that a gas leak had caused the blast, Binay cautioned against "injecting politics" into the probe.

"The statements of Apostol and General Ticman reek of politics. It leads me to believe that the police and Malacañang have already made up their minds, and they will now use this issue for political purposes," said Binay, the president of the United Opposition.

Binay said he would ask the private sector for help in forming the two fact-finding bodies.

"It is in the best interest not only of Makati and the private sector but also of the entire country that the investigation be seen as impartial and competent," the mayor said.

"Whatever the cause of the blast, if the process of finding out the truth is conducted in a professional and impartial manner, the people will accept it," he said.

Criminal probe

Director Geary Barias, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, someone has to pay for explosion.

"This is a criminal investigation, not a fact-finding probe," Barias told reporters in Camp Crame. "People were killed and injured. So this will lead to the filing of charges for a criminal act, or criminal negligence."

Barias said the PNP was trying to be "deliberate, accurate and thorough" in its investigation in order to determine not only the cause of the explosion but also accountability.

"The burden of proof is on us; that's why we have to be thorough," he said.

Barias said the PNP had yet to establish who could be responsible for "the situation in the basement."

"We are still at the point of proving whether it's an accident that happened there," he said.

He countered statements made by ALI that there was nothing wrong in the G2 basement before the explosion occurred, saying the PNP was holding a maintenance logbook indicating that ventilation at the site was not functioning at the time of the blast.

"That logbook is official, and it was taken [from ALI] legally," he said.

But he was quick to add that ALI officials had been cooperating with police "since Day 1."

Barias also said the National Bureau of Investigation was examining the 19 truckloads of sewage water taken from the G2 basement. He said the examination would likely take five days.

RDX

Razon said the RDX question would have to be answered by experts before police could conclude that what had occurred was a gas explosion and not a terror attack.

In particular, he said, police wanted to find out if RDX could be found in diesel, and in methane as well.

"We are still consulting petrochemical experts because this is beyond the police's expertise," Razon said.

PNP Crime Lab investigators had earlier said they found traces of RDX—a component of the C4 military explosive—at the blast site.

Ticman said the PNP was giving itself at least two weeks to settle the RDX question.

He added: "We have looked at the sabotage angle—if someone came into the basement to produce the spark that ignited the mixture of dangerous gases. But we didn't find anybody nearby."

Trillanes' witness

On the sidelines of a hearing of his coup d'etat case before a Makati court, detained Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV said he had a witness who could back his claim that the military was behind the G2 explosion.

"We're building a case right now. We're debriefing a member of the special operations team of [National Security Adviser] Norberto Gonzales," Trillanes told reporters.

He said he was standing by his earlier statements accusing Gonzales and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon of masterminding the explosion.

Trillanes, who played a leading role in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, said the witness was in a safehouse and had "sensitive information," including the purported real cause of the explosion, the names of the members of Gonzales' special operations team, and the places and dates of their activities.

The former Navy officer scoffed at what he called the PNP's *"pozo negro* (septic tank) theory."

"We can't possibly accept that. It's been debunked by experts. This is not the first time that the PNP was involved in a coverup," he said, adding:

"This government has done nothing to earn our benefit of the doubt. It has mastered the art of coverup."

He cited the February 2004 SuperFerry 14 bombing, which police initially said was caused by a gas tank explosion but admitted eight months later as having been the handiwork of the extremist Abu Sayyaf.

In response to flak he had drawn for making statements without presenting proof, Trillanes said, specifically addressing the INQUIRER: "I would like to assure the public that I do think before I talk.

"I was elected to do the right thing. I'm not here to fool anyone. All my previous statements were backed by information."

Told of what Trillanes had announced, Razon said: "Let the witness come out. Let him present evidence so that we can know what they know."

But Barias said the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group had earlier interviewed Trillanes and got nothing from him. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Alcuin Papa and Julie M. Aurelio*

Binay OKs reopening of Glorietta complex

By DJ Yap

THE GLORIETTA COMPLEX reopened its doors to customers yesterday, having been given by Makati City officials the green light to resume operations following a stringent safety inspection.

Mayor Jejomar Binay approved the request of the property owner, Ayala Land Inc. (ALI), to open Glorietta 1, 3 and 4 shortly before the shopping complex's opening hour of 10 a.m.

Glorietta 2, the center of the powerful explosion on Oct. 19, remained closed to the public.

ALI was given the green light after satisfying all safety requirements, the mayor said.

Twice yesterday—before 7 a.m. and at past noon—Binay toured the complex with ALI representatives for a final check.

"We were satisfied with what we saw," he said.

"There were only a few people, but it's understandable that many are still scared. But let me assure the public that based on our inspections and the safety precautions, it's safe to go back to Glorietta," he said.

After inspecting the malls, Binay, with his son, Councilor Junjun Binay, who heads the Makati Rescue team, visited the makeshift shrine for the 11 persons killed in the explosion.

Father and son laid a wreath at the shrine and said a silent prayer.

ALI spokesperson Alfonso Reyes said the company reopened Glorietta 1, 3 and 4 as soon as it received an advisory from the offices of the mayor and the city engineer.

Reyes said most of the tenants of the shopping complex also opened yesterday.

"We have been in constant communication with the tenants, but there may be some [shops] that didn't open. We left it to their discretion," he said on the phone. *With a report from Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

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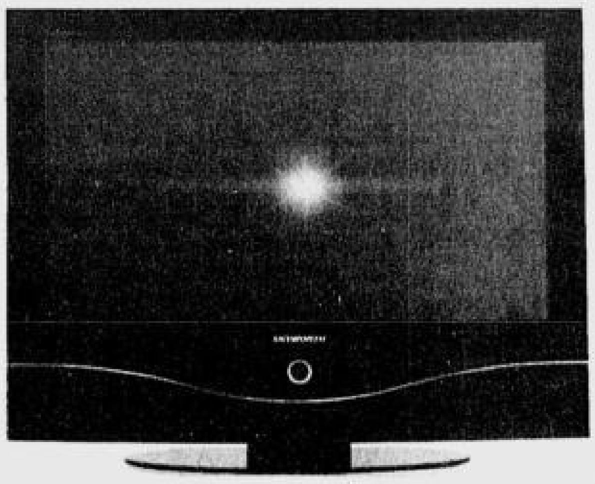

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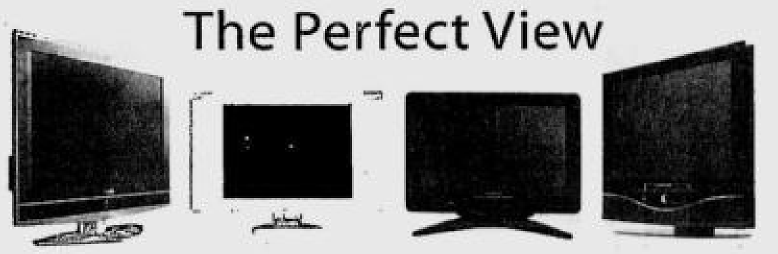

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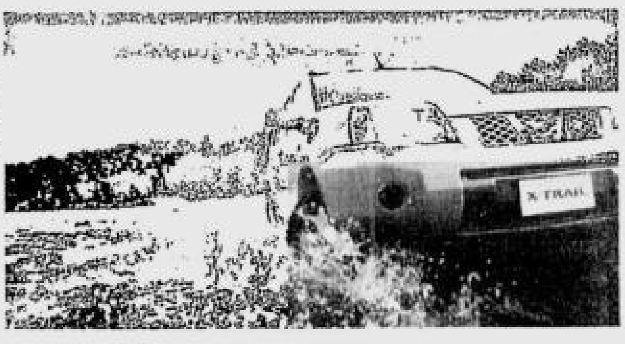

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NISSAN

OFWs: Saudis tortured us

By Jerome Aning

SAYING THAT THE TESTIMONY used to convict them was obtained through torture, three overseas Filipino workers convicted of "chop-chop" slayings in Saudi Arabia last year insisted they were innocent and asked the government to help have the case reinvestigated.

. Eduardo Arcilla and brothers Edison and Rolando Gonzales, who spoke in tape-recorded conversations with the Migrante International, denied any involvement in the gruesome April 2006 murders in which the bodies of the three victims were chopped up, stuffed in plastic bags and dumped in a Jeddah neighborhood.

Arcilla and the Gonzales brothers were found guilty of killing Reno Lumbang, Jeremias Bucod and Dante Rivero and were ordered beheaded by a Jeddah court.

Four other accused—Victor Alfonso, Omar Basilio, Efren Dimahon and Joel Sinamban—were meted out 1,000 lashes and eight years' imprisonment after being found guilty of illegal gambling and of being accomplices to the murders.

The Saudi police said the eight Filipino workers had confessed to their roles in the killings and led police to where some of the body parts of the victims had been thrown or hidden.

But in conversations recently with Migrante staff who used a mobile phone sneaked into their detention cell, Arcilla and the Gonzales brothers claimed they were tortured into confessing to the crime.

Alfonso, Dimahon and Sinam ban, who were also interviewed by Migrante, said they were tortured into providing the testimony that convicted Arcilla and the Gonzales brothers.

"We won't be seeking the government's help if we were guilty. We're asking help because we had nothing to do with the murders," Rolando Gonzales said.

"These claims of torture are very serious and should be looked into by our government A speedy, full and hands-on attention is needed right now, while we still have enough time to save them from decapitation," said Migrante chair Connie Bragas-Regalado.

Among those who participated in the alleged torture was a certain Saliq Saimobin, a Filipino interpreter employed by the Saudis.

After a month of almost daily torture, Rolando said he confessed to the crime after being told by the interpreter that he might be tortured to death.

"I wrote what he [the interpreter] dictated until I implicated my own brother against my will," Rolando said.

Sinamban said he was bothered by his conscience because his false testimony led to the death sentences for Arcilla and the Gonzales brothers, who were his friends.

"All the statements we made were all lies and manufactured with the help of the interpreter," Sinamban said.

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Bidding Guidelines will be available at the Property and Supply Management Division, General Services Department, Rm 704, Atrium of Makati Condominium, Makati Avenue, City of Makati beginning October 24, 2007 upon payment of the corresponding non-refundable fee.

Pre-bid conference shall be held on the above schedule at 2:00 in the afternoon at Room 602, 6th floor, Arnel Taduran Hall, Atrium of Makati Condominium, Makati Avenue, City of Makati. Schedule of submission and opening of bids will be announced during the said conference.

The Pag-IBIG Fund reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality or accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the Fund. Further, the Pag-IBIG Fund assumes no obligations whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses or losses that may be incurred in participating in this bidding.

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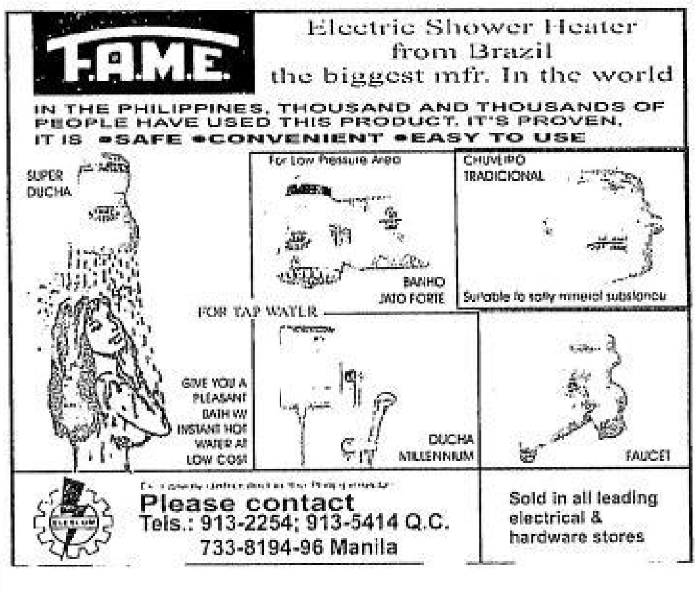
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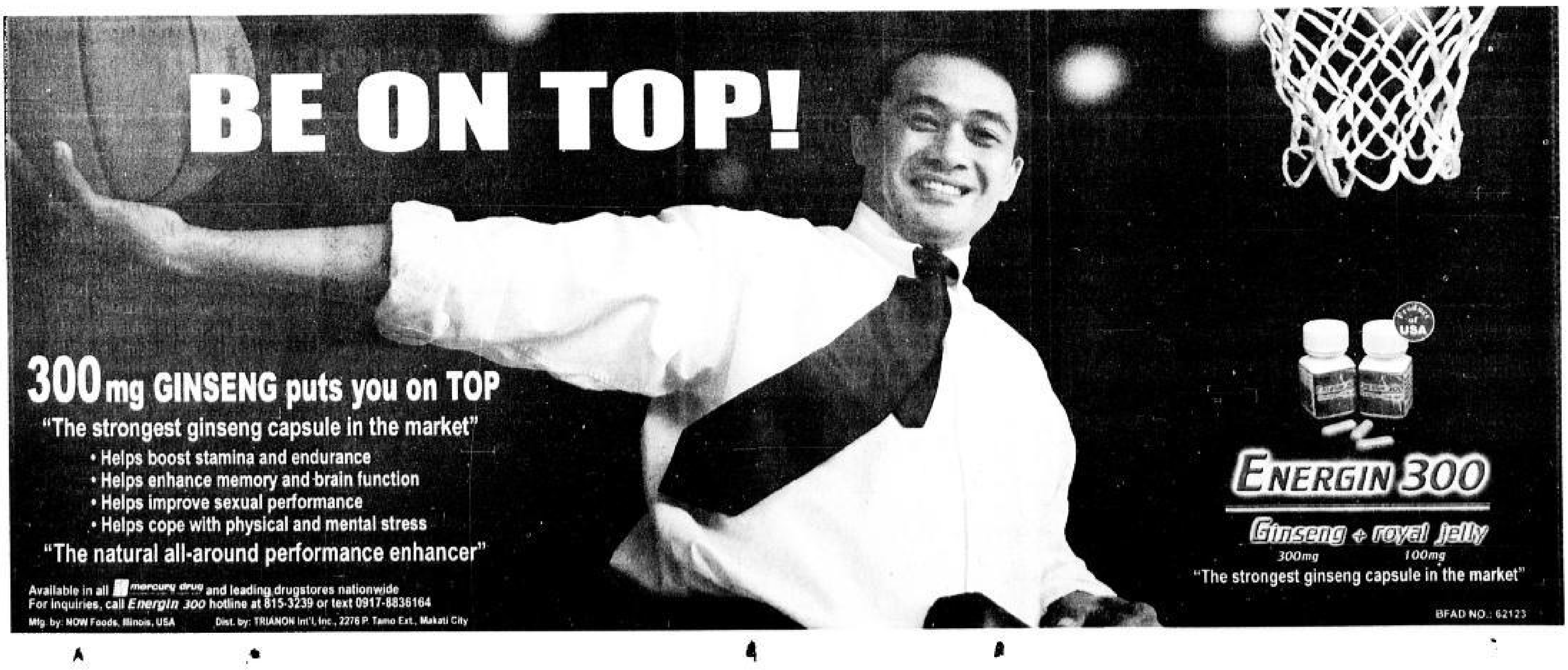
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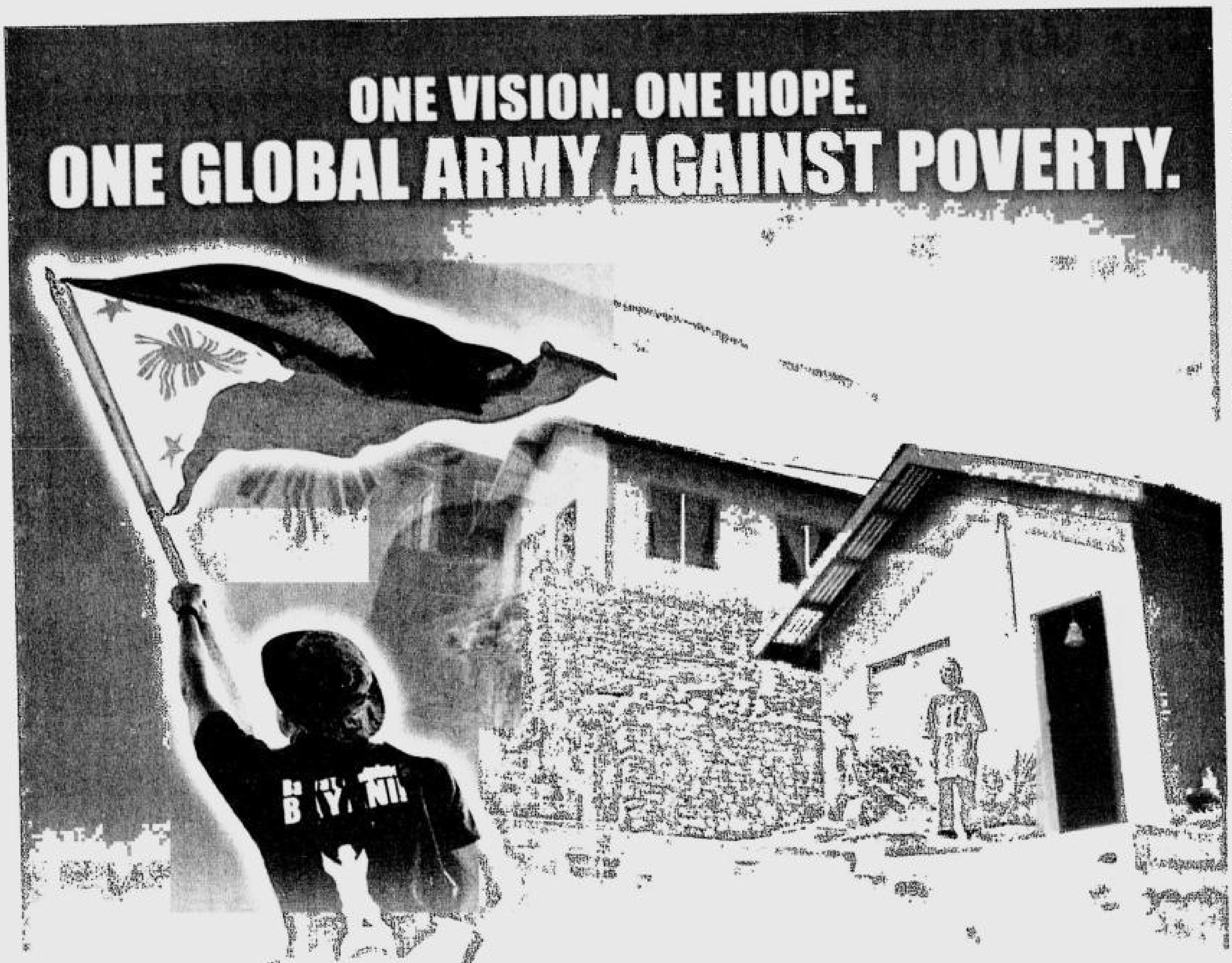
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Salo Salo ng mga Bayani - Cocktails and Entertainment - 5:30 - 8:30pm, GK1World Mainstage with "TAO PO" street theater production

OCTOBER 27 SATURDAY

GK1World Bayani Marathon - 6AM, MOA Grounds / **KB Olympics & Paraisong Pambata** - 8am - 4pm, GK1World Grounds
Kultura "Diwa" Workshop with Joey Ayala - 9am - 12nn, GK1World Mainstage with TAO PO / **Healthcare Volunteers Assembly** - 9am - 12nn, GK1World Grounds
Forum: Productivity with Go-Negosyo and ESA - 9am - 3pm, GK1World Grounds / **Grand Pinakbet Pakain** - 12nn - 1:30pm, BayanAnihan Farms
Forum: Shelter & Environment - 1pm - 4pm, MOA Cinema/ **TAO PO** - 2pm, GK1World Grounds / **Forum: Health & Education** - 1pm - 4pm, MOA Cinema
Martsa ng mga Bayani - 4pm, MOA Grounds / **Gabi ng Parangal** - 5:30pm, GK1World Mainstage / **Thanksgiving Mass** - 9:30pm, GK1World Mainstage
Piging ng Pagkakaisa: Pagbabahagi ng Tinapay - 10:30pm, GK1World Mainstage / **GK1MB Concert** - 11pm, GK1World Mainstage

FOR FRIDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY

BayanAnihan Farms - Model Farms on Display - 8am - 10pm / **GK Village Stores** - 8am - 10pm
Lakaran sa GK1World Village - 9am & 3pm, Open to all / **Kalye Kainan** - 24 hours

Razon says

BUSINESSMAN ENRIQUE K. RAZON JR. EXpressed "disgust" over what he called "preposterous statements" linking him to the $329-million contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project won by ZTE Corp.

Jose "Joey" de Venecia III claimed that Razon had informed him that Benjamin Abalos Sr., who resigned as chair of the Commission on Elections on Oct. 1, had promised $70 million in kickbacks to Jose Miguel Arroyo, husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

De Venecia also said that Arroyo had wanted him to stop pursuing the NBN deal in order for the latter to get the $70 million once the deal was awarded to China-appointed ZTE Corp.

"Joey's statement about the $70 million is delusional, pure fiction. He is hallucinating, and he should really seek professional help. I cannot

JDV son says G

From page A1

Venecia's revelations. "He (De Venecia) was not just content with bringing a few people down. He wanted to burn the whole house down. He was not content with using just a gun. He used a machine gun," Roxas said.

De Venecia said that based on the account o Neri, he knew about the latter's conversation with the President in which the then Neda director general told her about the bribe offer even before Neri testified in the Senate on Sept. 26.

Disappointed

De Venecia said he was disappointed that Neri did not tell the whole truth about what he and M Arroyo had talked about.

De Venecia then recalled what Neri had sai about his conversation with the President. "If I remember it went like this. When Secretary Neri told the President that Abalos had offered him P200 million, the President responded, "*Bakit d mo tinanggap?* (Why didn't you take it?)"

(De Venecia has accused Abalos of brokering the ZTE deal in exchange for a commission. Abalos denied the allegation and resigned as Comelec chair on Oct. 1.)

"Secretary Neri's response to that was, 'Ma'am, *hindi po ako ganong klaseng tao.*' (Ma'am, I'm no that kind of person.) It was only at this point th the President said that '*Huwag mo nang tanggapin pero i-approve mo ang* project (Don't a cept it, but approve the project)," Neri told th Senate committees looking into the ZTE deal.

(Neri invoked executive privilege on Sept. 2 when the senators pressed him during his Sena appearance on what the President had instruct him to do about the ZTE deal after she was told o the bribe offer.)

De Venecia claimed that Neri had told th same story about his conversation with the Pre dent to columnist Jarius Bondoc, Rep. Ronal Zamora and TV news anchor Ricky Carandang.

Imagining things

Contradicting De Venecia's allegation, Neri i sisted that the President had discouraged h from accepting the bribe offered by Abalos.

"Totally untrue. She (President Arroyo) to me not to accept it," said Neri, now head of t Commission on Higher Education.

"I stand by what I said in the Senate. Joey imagining things or remembers things as to wh he wished would have happened," Neri said i text message from Hong Kong.

Interviewed over dzMM, Neri said he w "shocked" by De Venecia III's latest statements

President confirms bribe offer

In a talk with reporters in New Delhi on Oct the President candidly admitted that she was i deed informed by Neri of the bribe offer. "Ya can confirm that," she said.

But she told Neri to reject the offer. "Of cou I told him not to accept it," she said. The Pr dent did not elaborate on the circumstances s rounding the bribery.

In his testimony, De Venecia insisted "(Neri) was scared to talk because of what he h told me for the last week and a half and I k for a fact he is living under duress."

Neri said that he "can move around freely" and that he "can talk to anybody I want."

De Venecia said he sought Razon upon the a vice of his friend, Buboy, to help him in clarif "what the government processes are and whether a BOT proposal that I had was still a propriate."

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Joey 'delusional,' 'hallucinating'

think of any other reason why he should be saying these things," Razon said.

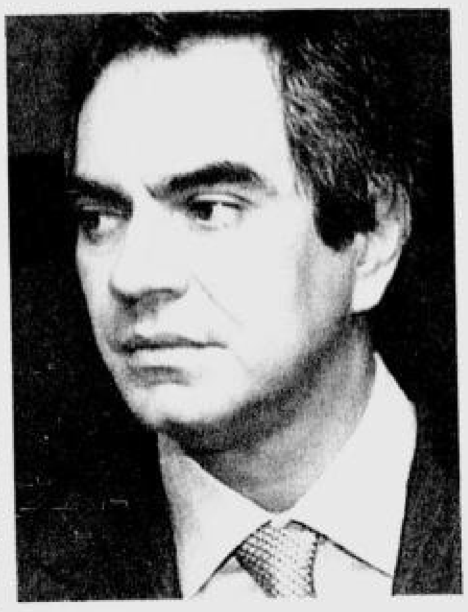
De Venecia said he talked to Razon after meeting Arroyo at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City last March, the same meeting where the President's husband allegedly told him to "back off" from the deal.

Arroyo has denied doing such a thing.

"I clearly recall that he was very insistent on seeing me to discuss his problem with ZTE. After asking around, I told him that my reading of the events was that the government would likely be doing a government-to-government deal with no private sector involvement.

This happened in the first quarter of this year, and that was the last of it as far as I'm concerned," Razon said. *Riza T. Olchondra*

JOEY de Venecia



ENRIQUE Razon

MA behind ...

(AHI), submitted an unsolicited proposal to undertake the NBN project on a build-operate-transfer (BOT) scheme.

But an unsolicited proposal for a priority project was against the BOT law. (*See story on Page 1.*)

Wack Wack encounter

De Venecia said he called Razon to explain his dilemma and told him that Communication Secretary Leandro Mendoza was arranging a reconciliation meeting between him (De Venecia) and Abalos at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong.

"He (Razon) told me to please call him immediately after that meeting so we could discuss what transpired so that he may shed some light on it or even explain," De Venecia said.

He was referring to the meeting in which he was told by the President's husband to "back off" from the deal.

After the meeting, De Venecia said he went to Razon's office at the Manila port where he related the incident with Arroyo.

De Venecia said he was surprised by Razon's reaction.

"Ricky Razon then said, "*P.. ina kasi yang* Abalos *na yan. Sinabi pa niya kay* Mike *na mayroon siyang* $70 million *dito. Hindi ito makalimutan ni* Mike (Abalos told Mike that he would get $70 million. Mike could not forget this)," De Venecia quoted Razon as saying.

Payoff jacked up contract

De Venecia said the alleged $70-million payoff to the President's husband jacked up the ZTE contract from $262 million to $329 million.

De Venecia said Razon "reacted negatively to what happened to me and the First Gentleman at Wack Wack and he felt that it was very inappropriate."

"He had hoped the reconciliatory meeting would state the positions of each party but that didn't happen. Razon got angry. He was hoping this whole issue of AHI and the Abalos group could be decided. I did meet Razon again two to three days after at the Manila Golf Club. He said the group of Abalos and ZTE will do the project on their own. At least now I know, at least I could pursue my BOT," De Venecia said.

Speaker and President meet

At the hearing, De Venecia also said that over the past few weeks, Razon and other cronies of Ms Arroyo tried to talk him out of testifying in the Senate and to patch up things between her and his father, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.

"Prior to the first Senate hearing, I got multiple calls from Ricky Razon the night before the first hearing. My father told me a few days ago, he was invited through the kindness of Buboy Virata to meet with Endika Aboitiz. Aboitiz said the Palace wanted a ceasefire between them and the De Venecias.

"My father asked 'What do you mean?' Endika said the first thing you have to do is "*rendahan*" (rein in) Jarius Bondoc ... former Congressman (Rolex) Suplico ... and Joey. My father related to me that in exchange for those requests Razon will stop attacking me and others who are involved in revealing onerous parts of the NBN-ZTE controversy," said the younger De Venecia.

The Speaker declined Aboitiz's request, saying that he had no control over Bondoc who had hit him when he ran for president in 1998, that Suplico was from the opposition, and that his son had a mind of his own, according to the younger De Venecia.

Screamed at

The businessman claimed that another meeting took place the following day at Aboitiz's home in San Lorenzo Village in Makati where his father claimed the President "screamed at him."

When the Speaker took his leave, the President allegedly called out and told him to stay. "He (the Speaker) went back and sat again but nothing conclusive was reached," said the younger De Venecia.

Asked by Sen. Jamby Madrigal why he did not come out with these information in his affidavit or in his previous appearances at the Senate hearing, De Venecia said he initially felt that what Razon and Neri had told him were "hearsay."

But the technical working group of the blue ribbon committee convinced him "that I have to say what all I know, because this is also in aid of legislation."

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, chair of the blue ribbon committee, said that the senators viewed De Venecia's statements based on other people's testimony as hearsay.

"As a rule the more names you mention, the easier it is to prove you are lying or to prove you are telling the truth. There are more loose ends," Cayetano said.

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Triumph of the ex-con

EDITORIAL

ALL WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WHAT'S WRONG with the presidential pardon for convicted plunderer Joseph Estrada, once president of the Philippines, can be found in the letter his lawyers wrote President Macapagal-Arroyo on Oct. 22. "In the highest national interest, to which President Estrada is always willing to subordinate his own, we appeal to Your Excellency to grant him full, free and unconditional pardon," they wrote.

How characteristic of Estrada, he who pressured both the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System to buy Belle Corp. shares in order to earn a nine-digit commission when he was still president, to confuse personal need with national interest. As with that billion-peso investment, "full, free and unconditional pardon" for Estrada leaves the people of the Philippines holding a virtually empty bag.

Any Filipino with a strong sense of history and a solid grasp of the facts can only reel from the assumptions, or rather the presumptions, contained in the letter.

Take the claim, for example, that "Estrada is always willing to subordinate his own" interest to that of the nation's. Can anyone, outside of the Estrada camp and the circle of politically calculating lawyers Malacañang has learned to depend on, read this claim without wincing?

Estrada's obvious and unreasonable contempt for the Sandiganbayan, his patent effort to undermine the credibility of the judiciary, his ready acceptance of occasional special treatment from the courts because of his stature as former president coupled with his dismissive attitude toward the "special court" created to try him (a creation possible only and precisely because of his stature)—these are not the acts of a man and a politician "always willing to subordinate" his own interest to that of the state. In fact, they are the very acts of a man who, despite his protestations about a clean conscience and adherence to the truth, tried mightily to delay a judicial reckoning.

And the highest national interest? The anti-graft court found that the illegal numbers game *jueteng* was all but centralized in Malacañang during Estrada's watch, with the commander in chief receiving protection money himself. This, whichever way you look at it, does not seem to us to be in the country's best interests. And yet, posturing all the way to a presidential pardon, Estrada portrays himself and his tumultuous term in office as the very height of competence and patriotism.

The letter also reminds us, as if we needed reminding, that Estrada cannot bring himself to seek a presidential pardon. It is his lawyers who end up signing the letter, as though the letter were a court motion and the President part of the judiciary. The letter also continues to refer to him, six years after he was ousted in a peaceful uprising, and three years after the term he was elected to serve ended, as "President Estrada."

After it came out, a blustery Estrada distanced himself from the letter and what little deference was present in it. "I realized I really don't stand a chance with the justice system that we have ... so I bowed to the wisdom of my lawyers," he said.

Pardon, of course, is like consensual sex; there must be a consensus of two. President Macapagal-Arroyo may have been thick-skinned enough to deliberately ignore the insulting premises contained in the lawyers' letter, especially Estrada's obvious lack of remorse and repentance for two counts of plunder. She may have been calculating enough to factor in Estrada's residual popularity into the exercise of an awesome executive power that was designed to allow the state to correct errors in the administration of justice, not to distribute more political benefits. She may have been optimistic enough to believe that a pardon for Estrada will afford her a reasonable exit strategy for herself.

But she is wrong to pardon Estrada now. She is sending the message that, once again, political expediency trumps political maturity and the pursuit of justice. Does anyone doubt that the pardon is really meant, not to save Estrada's skin, but hers?

And what do we get in return for this Faustian bargain? An empty bag, where the rule of law used to be.

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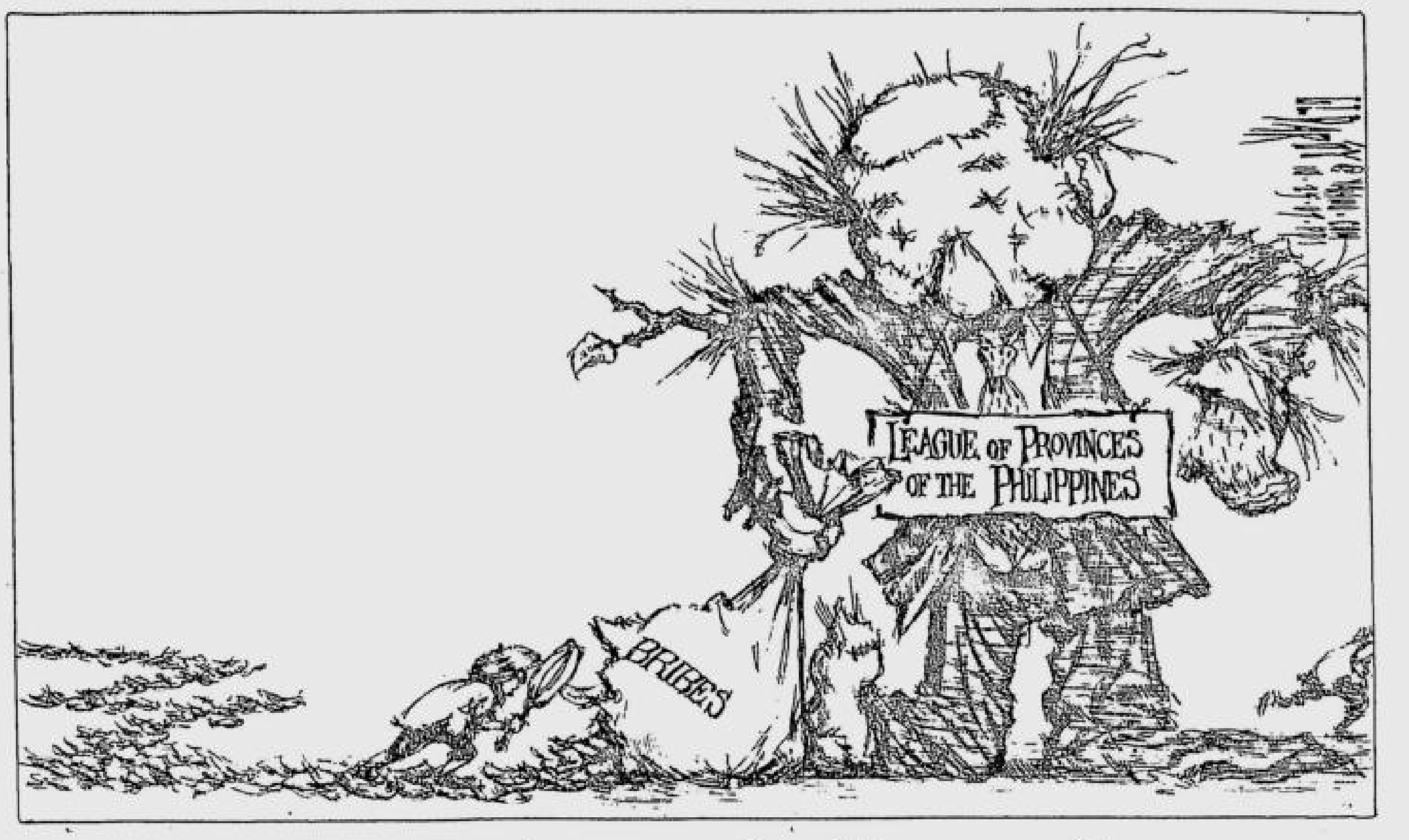
LEAGUE OF PROVINCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
BRIBES

Gov't caught in web of its own lies

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

WHEN A PERSON LIES, HE GETS CAUGHT IN his own web of lies. The details of his story don't agree because they are all false. That is why cross examination of a witness is important in a court trial. A skilled cross-examiner brings out inconsistencies in a testimony. And that is what is happening now to the stories being spun by Malacañang and its allies on the distribution of cash in Malacañang when the spinmasters couldn't explain the obvious bribery.

Because the distribution of money in Malacañang without receipts from the recipients (bribe-givers don't ask for receipts and bribe-recipients don't sign receipts) is illegal, no matter how you try to explain it, Malacañang was at a loss on how to get out. At first, Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno said it was Speaker Jose de Venecia's usual "*pabaon*" to the congressmen. But why would JDV distribute it in Malacañang instead of in his domain, the House of Representatives? And why would the Speaker give money to at least two governors?

Caught lying, the allies of President Macapagal-Arroyo next tried to sell the story that the money came from the League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP). Indeed, the LPP came out with a statement that it is the source of P1 million given to Governors Ed Panlilio of Pampanga and Joselito Mendoza of Bulacan. It said it was assistance to newly elected governors and that it has P21 million deposited in three banks: Philippine National Bank, Land Bank of the Philippines and Banco de Oro.

This new lie raises a lot of other questions: If the PNB, LBP and BDO are the depository banks of LPP, why did the money given to Panlilio come from the Bank of Commerce? And why give help to Pampanga and Bulacan when they are two of the richest provinces in the Philippines? P500,000 is just half-a-day's collection of quarry fees in Panlilio's Pampanga. Panlilio and Mendoza are the only governors who have admitted, so far, to having been given cash.

And if the money came from the LPP, why was Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco also given P200,000? If not from the LPP, where did the cash he received come from? Besides Cuenco, other congressmen were seen and photographed leaving Malacañang with similar bulging paper bags, although they have not (yet?) admitted receiving money. But who are they fooling?

What a coincidence *naman* that congressmen and local government officials are given hundreds of thousands of pesos each on the same day and in the same place (Malacañang) by different organizations.

The obvious explanation is that the money came from only one source: the President's huge discretionary and intelligence funds. But why hide it, when the President is authorized to release funds? Because the law says the disbursement of public funds should have a paper trail—vouchers and receipts—and without them it is illegal and those responsible can be imprisoned.

So why is there no paper trail? Because bribes, being illegal, are not supposed to have any paper trail.

The administration has been caught lying and it is having a difficult time extricating itself from its lies.

* * *

Another web of lies being woven by the administration is the cause of the Glorietta blast. To begin with, the explosion could have been a cover-up, to sidetrack attention from the Malacañang bribery. There are suspicions that it was perpetrated by the government itself for obvious reasons.

But who can be blamed for it? The government cannot admit doing it. It cannot be blamed on terrorists because that would spook foreign investors. So police investigators are saying it could have been an accident caused by a faulty diesel tank and a leaking septic vault in the basement.

Ayala Land protests that its equipment and facilities are not faulty, that technicians inspect the basement every day. Experts say that methane from a septic tank is malodorous, like the smell of rotten eggs, and that if it was leaking, employees and even mall customers would have smelled it. Also, that a methane explosion could not have been that powerful. And that diesel will not explode unless it is heated at very high temperatures.

There are indications that police investigators are preparing the public mind to a conclusion that it was an accident. But does anybody still believe the police, especially if what they are investigating involves their bosses?

There are calls for an independent body of investigators. Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay said he would form one and everybody agrees.

The public's conclusion is that it was a bomb planted by someone hired by a panicking Malacañang. Even if it was really an accident, if it was declared so by police investigators, nobody would believe it. It would be another nail in the coffin of police credibility. So the police should give way to the investigation by a group of independent experts.

I think the families of those who died in the blast and those who were injured deserve to know the truth. It will not bring back their loved ones but at least they will know that they are not being told lies. Giving them petty cash is not justice. They deserve to know the truth.

The administration is caught in its own web of lies. Like somebody caught in quicksand struggling to get out, the more it tries to extricate itself with more lies, the deeper it sinks into the quagmire of its lies.

What would be its lies again? *Abangan.*

When C-5 cuts through the UP campus

Passion for Reason

Raul C. Pangalangan

THE CIRCUMFERENTIAL ROAD DESIGNED to link the south to the north expressways is about to be expanded and extended northward, and to do so, it will cut right through the heart of the staff housing area of the University of the Philippines, Pook Ricarte, Dagohoy and Palaris, displacing hundreds of families.

That wasn't the original plan, which would have tracked C-5 along the current Katipunan/Tandang Sora Road as it curved northward. In the 1990s, the C-5 expansion plan would have had minimal social dislocation.

The Supreme Court laid down the guiding principle in its decision relating to the extension of Edsa's southern tip from Taft Avenue all the way to Roxas Boulevard. The government had a choice: swing to the left through Cuneta Avenue and displace all the motels, or go straight through a residential area and mow down an entire neighborhood. The government, not surprisingly, chose to preserve the motels and raze the houses. The case went to the Court twice.

In the first decision, the Court cited the "social impact factor" and stopped the Department of Public Works and Highways from demolishing the houses, ordering the agency to redirect the Edsa extension to the proverbial "*biglang liko*" at Cuneta. If you are wondering how come today Edsa has still spared the Cuneta Avenue love nests, it is because the case went to the Court a second time a decade later, when all the homeowners (save one) had voluntarily sold out to the government, and the Court said that the last hold-out could not hold the "sovereign will and choice inutile," as it were holding the Republic hostage. (The case titles are De Knecht v. Hon. Bautista and Republic v. De Knecht—I mention this to pay tribute to the last resolute resident.)

In the early 1990s, applying the "social impact" test, the DPWH's dilemma was a bit simpler: to widen the road, it could either eat into the administrative employees' housing, or it could expropriate what was at that time the outer edge of a golf course.

I was thus taken aback when I recently saw a map showing that C-5 would no longer track the Katipunan/Tandang Sora route, but will instead slice straight through the communities at Ricarte, Dagohoy and Palaris. It will hew very close to the rear of both the Ilang-Ilang women's dorm and the International House for foreign students, and ram through the middle of what is currently a densely packed neighborhood.

I am not aware if the UP central administration or any of the UP labor unions have taken up the cudgels for the affected employees. I am aware, however, that the staff housing areas have been an administration headache for a while now. Only a fraction of the residents are actually UP staff members, and perhaps the C-5 plan merely represents a convergence of preferences for the DPWH, MMDA and the UP central administration. Moreover, to insist on the old plan would have pitted UP's staff housing against the golf course which has now been partly converted into posh Ayala Village. That would be one bruising emotional debate, and will resurrect the familiar battle lines in the class struggle that, come to think of it, UP is so fond of. It is certainly understandable if the UP central administration wouldn't want any C-5 route that would jeopardize its relations with its new partner, Ayala Corp., for the UP equivalent of Stanford's Silicon Valley.

By simply ramming through the staff housing area, C-5 avoids all these agonizing dilemmas. Indeed, since the government will help relocate only those residents with legitimate UP ties, the new DPWH plan will harness the old divide-and-conquer strategy: it will pit the UP affiliates against the outsiders.

The C-5 debate though brings to the fore the intractable problem of informal settlers (or "squatters") and urban squalor. Over the decades, they have encroached on UP land from all directions. Legally, UP has triumphed repeatedly before the courts, affirming its title against bogus claimants so bold that they have many times sued the university before the Supreme Court. But the legal victories are no match for the de facto "creeping expropriation," and I am glad that UP has now taken creative steps to hold them at bay—like building up along the outer perimeter to create a natural barrier and, yes, by creating the Ayala-assisted technology park.

But what hobbles UP's efforts to stem the unrelenting encroachment is, so typically UP, rather ideological. It is that the university is intellectually disabled from evicting the informal settlers. The seat of Left-wing advocacy in the nation simply is caught between its declared ideal about humanizing the world and its practical workaday need to secure its borders.

The C-5 expansion is, in that sense, heaven-sent for a UP that wishes to avoid that debate. "Oh no, this is no squatter eviction. It's just a road-widening that will pave over hundreds of houses!" To sweep the deeper issues under the rug using the subterfuge of a C-5 widening may be the pragmatic thing to do, but it is so untypically UP.

Let us confront the issues head-on. On one hand, how do we preserve one of the last green spaces in the metropolis today, and to what extent should academic land be used for other purposes? On the other, if indeed C-5 is now a done deal, where lies the true interests of the university? What will the university receive as just compensation? What benefits, if any, can assist the displaced employees? Will the land eastward along the outer edge of C-5 remain titled to the university, and if so, who will use it?

Only by facing the issues squarely can UP show the same candor and boldness it has long demanded of others.

* * *

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

Pickpockets

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS HAVE PLAYED BEfore an incredulous public the shell game of robbing Peter to pay Paul. They call to mind pickpockets who transfer the objects of their theft from their left pocket to the right.

According to Governors Joel Reyes of Palawan, spokesman of the League of Provinces of the Philippines, and Ben Evardone of Eastern Samar, LPP secretary general, the cash gifts of P500,000 apiece handed to Governors Joselito Mendoza of Bulacan and Eddie Panlilio of Pampanga last Oct. 11 in Malacañang came from the league.

Pressed by mounting public demand for an explanation of the source of the cash and the purpose of the generous hand-out, Reyes and Evardone admitted Tuesday that the money came from the LPP fund contributed by its members and intended for "capacity building."

This admission came as a breakthrough in tracking the money trail as to the source of the bounty and flatly contradicted an earlier blanket denial of the cash distribution during the LPP meeting attended by President Macapagal-Arroyo. At last, we are getting somewhere in tracing the money trail, from the admissions of the governors themselves. In the process, certain hard facts have emerged that allow us to make a case of looting of public funds, starting with the now indisputable fact that the distribution was done inside Malacañang Palace, acting as a clearing house for the partition of the bounties of public office.

For the first time, Reyes and Evardone revealed the existence of a "capacity building" fund under the custody of the governors' league. But at least six governors from the Visayas heard about the fund for the first time. "If it is the league's money they gave out to the governors," said Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Maranon, who is serving his third term, "we will request for our share."

Leyte Gov. Jericho Petilla said he was not aware that the LPP had a "capacity-building program" for new governors. The meeting was specifically called to discuss the barangay elections set for Oct. 29.

Antique Gov. Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez, a member of the LPP's national executive board, said she had not heard of the capacity-building program for new governors, although she knew of an "alliance-building program." Perez, a third-term governor, said the LPP board passed a resolution on Oct. 6, 2006, to allocate funds for the program, but new governors were not given financial assistance.

Capiz Gov. Victor Tanco Sr., a newcomer, was in the Palace but was not around when cash was distributed. He said he was just told to go to Malacañang to have lunch with the President.

According to former Bulacan Gov. Josefina de la Cruz, the room in the Palace where her brother, Gov. Joselito Mendoza, was handed the two money bags (one of which he handed to Panlilio) was the same room where Kampi and Lakas-CMD gave out party campaign funds in 2004 and 2007.

A timeline of the meeting given by Mendoza indicated that the governors and mayors gathered at Heroes Hall at 11 a.m. for the oath taking of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines and for lunch. At 12:30 p.m., an announcement was made for the governors to go to the Guest House. Forty-two governors went. The meeting started at 12:45 p.m. Mendoza sat on the last row close to Evardone. An LPP staff member approached Mendoza, to ask if he was a friend of Panlilio. When he said yes and asked why, the staff member said, "Governor Evardone wants to know." Mendoza then approached Evardone, who told him: "You will be given something for community projects." At some point in the afternoon, it was announced that President Arroyo was arriving. The meeting ended at 4 p.m.

Last Tuesday, Reyes said the money given to Mendoza came from "contributions" of LPP members totaling P21 million. "This is for the capacity-building program of the new governors," he said.

Reyes did not say where the contributions were sourced—from the governors' pockets or the provincial treasury. This is a question that has to be pursued relentlessly. The answer is critical to establish a case of malversation of public funds.

Perez gave a hint on the nature of the contributions to the LPP fund. She said Antique, a second-class province, has contributed P120,000 annually. The assistance was to be extended to not more than 15 new governors.

Tanco said Capiz, a third-class province, contributed around P20,000 annually. If all the governors contributed an average of P100,000 annually, he said, that would add up to P7.9 million, and if P500,000 was given to each of the 15 new governors, that would amount to P7.5 million, wiping out the fund.

The total contributions calculated by Tanco fall far short of the claim of Reyes that the governors' league had a "capacity-building fund" amounting to P21 million. The LPP has to explain how much money the league still has, how much has been withdrawn and to whom the cash gifts were given and how much. Did the contributions come from kickbacks, *jueteng* underground money, or the internal revenue allocations from the central government?

These are valid public questions, demanding answers that cannot wait for reports of government auditors or the investigation of the Office of the Ombudsman. Public funds cannot just be moved from the national government to the provincial government and then to the LPP by a sleight of hand.

A country 'born of the mind'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

TEL AVIV—"ISRAEL," SAID OUR SPEAKER, A native Israeli, "is a country born of the mind."

It may have sprung from the mind of Benjamin Herzl, in his book "Altneuland" (Old New Land), which spoke of a homeland for the Jewish people to "normalize" the condition of Jews around the world, but the state and nation of Israel was realized inside a stifling hall in a museum that had been the home of Tel Aviv's first mayor, Meir Dizengoff.

Today, Independence Hall, as the Tel Aviv Museum of Art is better known, stands in a classy neighborhood on Rothschild Boulevard, set among a cluster of lovely Bauhaus residences. A few steps inside the building, one finds the hall where, on May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the independence of the state of Israel.

The original carpeted stage, set with a table, some microphones and wooden chairs hastily borrowed from nearby cafés, on which Ben-Gurion and other political and social leaders of the time gathered to "create" Israel, is preserved in the hall. Overlooking everything is a portrait of Herzl, flanked by two flags, both bearing the Star of David in the "national colors" of blue and white.

Our guide Isaac asked us to imagine what it was like that afternoon, 59 years ago. The site of the declaration was chosen "because it was a concrete bunker, since we were expecting an Egyptian air strike" which in fact took place some hours after. The occasion was supposed to be a secret, but some 350 people showed up, many milling outside the museum.

Isaac played a recording of those historic few minutes: Ben-Gurion reading the declaration, a rabbi reciting a blessing, the shuffling of papers as the leaders signed the declaration, and then, the playing of the newly minted nation's anthem, Hatiqvah.

There was no room for an orchestra inside the hall crowded with the leading lights of Israeli society. The musicians were instead found on the floor above, waiting for a signal to start playing. Then everybody hastily left the building, because even as it was being born, the state of Israel was already at war.

* * *

THIS state of siege, of being a Jewish island in a sea of hostile Arab neighbors, is not palpable in this city these days. To my own surprise, Tel Aviv is a bustling cosmopolitan metropolis, with a row of luxury hotels on the rim of the beach facing the Mediterranean.

On my way here from London, I saw a TV promotion of a high-rise residential project in Tel Aviv that renowned architect and furniture designer Philippe Starck had designed. The twin round towers stand beside other soaring structures, testament to the booming real estate market in the city, which in turn has been fueled by Israel's $100-billion economy.

Other "amazing facts" provided by our hosts paint a picture of a country driven by innovation and entrepreneurship. Microsoft founder Bill Gates is supposed to have remarked that next to Silicon Valley, Israel is the most exciting place to be. Indeed, with more than 3,000 high-tech companies and start-ups, the country has the highest concentration of such firms in the world, second only to Silicon Valley. On a per capita basis, says our briefing paper, Israel has the largest number of biotech start-ups, the largest number of museums, the highest percentage of home computers, and the highest ratio of population with university degrees.

And most interesting to cell-phone loving Filipinos, the cell phone was developed in Israel by Israelis working in the local Motorola development center, the firm's biggest in the world.

"All the above while engaged in regular wars with an implacable enemy that seeks its destruction and an economy continuously under strain by having to spend more per capita on its own protection than any other country on earth."

* * *

FOR purposes of disclosure, I am in Israel as a member of a group of "journalists, policymakers and religious leaders" invited to visit the country by Project Interchange, an institute of the American Jewish Committee, and the Australia-Israel and Jewish Affairs Council. These bodies regularly run seminars for groups like ours, and, by meeting with Israeli, Arab-Israeli and Palestinian academics, policy advisors, community leaders and the like, it is hoped that we get a clearer view of the challenges Israel faces today and its attempts to work out a viable peaceful co-existence with its neighbors.

To get a first-hand view of one of these "challenges" we were taken on our first day on a helicopter tour over Israel's southern borders, and stopped at a look-out point over Gaza and then at the town of Sderot, near the border.

As we clambered down the watchtower that give a panoramic view of the Gaza Strip and the fence that snakes through the land, erected to keep out the "suicide bombers" who wrought havoc in Tel Aviv and other cities some years back, we found a wire service photographer sitting in the shade. Just minutes before we arrived, he said, some "kassam" rockets had been fired from Gaza, and he was waiting to take pictures of the possible Israeli retaliation. It's a commentary on the surreal situation in Israel, that in the meantime, the photographer was drafted into shooting our group pictures with our little digital cameras and his serious professional equipment.

In Sderot, we were brought to the police station to take a look at the "kassam" rockets, crude but deadly missiles crafted in workshops from such basic materials like water pipes and spare metal, and fired from Gaza. Some 15 people, including some children, have died from the random rocket attacks. Together, the twisted metal remains fill several shelves, symbols of the ongoing animosity between Israel and the peoples who surround it.

Mita Pardo de Tavera on Juan Luna

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

FORMER SOCIAL WELFARE SECRETARY MITA Pardo de Tavera passed away Tuesday after a lingering illness. She lived a long and meaningful life, caring for people not as a bureaucrat but more as a physician. And this was clear at her wake which was bursting with flowers and people who had come from all over to pay their respects.

Old photos made me see beyond the gentle, silver-haired grandmother I first met in 1988, when I was doing research on the soured relations between Juan Luna and the Pardo de Tavera family. How did a privileged and obviously pampered little girl grow into a woman who cared for the sick and the needy?

I sat in conversation with Mamita, and it didn't feel like I was speaking to a Cabinet secretary. It was more like listening to my grandmother narrating a time and place before mine. Normally quiet and soft-spoken, Mamita's voice would change drastically when she spoke of two Ilocanos: Ferdinand Marcos and Juan Luna.

I dug up the transcript of the first of several conversations I had with her over the years and decided to share them here, since Mamita passed away quietly on the eve of Juan Luna's 150th birthday.

There is a recent opera on Luna with a libretto by Fides Cuyugan Asensio whose dramatic parts were allegedly toned down because Mita was watching. The same for Virginia Moreno's play on Luna that is legendary because it has never been staged, allegedly because Mita would not be pleased.

Come to think of it, Mita attended every lecture on Luna I gave except the last one because she was then in the intensive care unit. I would open the lecture by warning her that she would not like or agree with everything I said but there was nothing personal in the presentation; I was just telling the story based on my sources. She never made a fuss, so I wonder why the librettist and the playwright felt censored when they have artistic license that historians do not have.

For Mita, the Luna tragedy is rooted in family honor and it was for this reason that she granted interviews that often began this way:

"I've often read that in a fit of jealousy, Luna killed his wife and mother-in-law, but until it was insinuated that it was for unfaithfulness, I had to say what I know of the affair. They [Juliana Gorricho, Paz Pardo de Tavera and little Andres 'Luling' Luna] were going down the stairs of the house and they did not tell Luna that they were abandoning him because he was violent. Very violent, like his brother [Antonio] the general who was a killer, [had a] killer's instinct, and so they were also afraid of this Juan Luna because he also had this killer's instinct. They were leaving the house, the two brothers Trinidad and Felix, with [their lawyer] Regidor were waiting across the street. When the three were going down the stairs, Luna flew into a rage and tried to stop them, and then he shot them. My grandfather Trinidad heard the shots, and so with Felix and Regidor they came to the rescue, running up the stairs. My grandfather, who was leading the group was shot in the shoulder."

My research shows that the women locked themselves inside an upstairs bathroom and shouted for help from the window. As the brothers entered the compound to help, Luna fired from the house and hit Felix in the chest, who was then dragged out to safety by Trinidad and Regidor. The police were summoned. More shots were heard from the bathroom, and when the smoke cleared, Juliana Gorricho lay dead and Paz was mortally wounded.

While the details, as Mamita related them, are not very accurate, she provided the social context for the tragedy that, like the recent Glorietta blast, is best described as an accident waiting to happen. Mita continued:

"This was the house of the Pardo de Taveras because the Lunas were—I don't want to sound class conscious—but everyone knows that the Lunas were a simple family that couldn't have had the opulence of living in Paris at the time. That was the house of the mother-in-law, who was a Gorricho, very wealthy. And that was what I think contributed to [Luna's] total deterioration because it was *parang* inferiority complex. Can you imagine living out of your mother-in-law? *Pagkatapos* you feel inferior and then your wife is going to leave because you are violent. That's it, he was really very violent."

Then as now, the scene of this tragedy is a posh residence in a posh Paris district. It is a real house, not an apartment building. Luna was indeed living in his mother-in-law's home.

Then there is the release of Luna after the trial. We are often told that Luna was acquitted because French courts recognized this as a "crime of passion." Mita had a different angle:

"You know why Luna was exonerated? On the basis of a provision in French law which says that a native people, very primitive people, have this tendency to run amok. And so it was considered that since he came from a primitive race, running amok was pardonable because that is a trait of primitive people. So *nainsulto pa ang mga Pilipino, nainsulto pa tayo,* as if we were monkeys hanging on our tails."

Interviews with descendants of heroes can be tricky and must be balanced with historical sources, but what has always fascinated me is the way history remains alive with these people. To them it is so real the events could have happened only yesterday.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Public health and law

THE SUPREME COURT DECISION OPENS WITH THIS unequivocal statement: "The Court and all parties involved are in agreement that the best nourishment for an infant is mother's milk . . . The ideal is, of course, for each and every Filipino child to enjoy the unequaled benefits of breast milk."

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

How do you achieve that ideal? That was what the Supreme Court had to answer, following a suit brought by milk manufacturers, through the Pharmaceutical and Health Care Association of the Philippines, against the Department of Health. The milk companies claimed the government had gone beyond its mandate when it issued new and stricter rules and regulations on breast-milk substitutes or infant formulas.

The Court's ruling, issued on Oct. 9, was picked up by mass media and depicted as being in favor of the milk manufacturers. I was distraught reading the newspaper reports, but fortunately, Unicef's Alexis Rodrigo sent out a press release a few days later to clarify that the decision was actually a victory for child health advocates. She also sent a copy of the decision, and after plowing through the 63 pages, I have to say it is not just a victory for child health advocates but for public health in general. This decision, penned by Associate Justice Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez, with Chief Justice Reynato S. Puno and the other eight associate justices concurring, should be required reading both for law and medical schools, a case study in how the law can uphold public health.

History

The decision presents an excellent review of our Breastfeeding Code, tracing it back to an International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes passed in 1981. For years, local activists, including pediatrician Dr. Naty Clavano, who passed away just a few days before the Supreme Court decision, had been unrelenting in their lobbying for a local Milk Code. It took the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship to make this possible. In October 1986, President Corazon Aquino signed Executive Order 51, which was almost an exact copy of the International Code. EO 51 allowed the health department to crack down on the reckless marketing of infant formulas that had been going on, including, for example, a ban on milk manufacturers' sales representatives entering maternity wards and giving out free samples to new mothers.

But the milk manufacturers found ways to get around the rules. Hospitals still give out "baby books" to new mothers, supposedly to record a child's milestones, but the books shamelessly promote infant formula on each page. For years, too, we've been bombarded by outrageous claims from the milk manufacturers about how their formulas increase the IQ of children.

Over the last 20 years, the World Health Organization has issued more resolutions calling for stricter regulation of the infant formula promotions. In May last year, the DOH issued new rules and regulations to crack down on the other promotional gimmicks. The new rules would have taken effect in July, but the milk companies sued. The Supreme Court had to issue a temporary restraining order, blocking the new rules, until it could decide.

Now the Court has decided, and in so many words, it upholds most of the health department's new rules and regulations on the grounds that these are part of the government's mandate to protect people's health. The Court went back to the 1917 Revised Administrative Code of the Philippine Islands, which defines the government's health regulatory function to include ". . . the dissemination of hygienic information among the people and especially the inculcation of knowledge on the proper care of infants. . ." Then there's the 1987 Administrative Code, which once again calls on the state to carry out certain duties: "to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them" and "to propagate health information and educate the population on important health, medical and environmental matters which have health implications."

Free enterprise

The milk manufacturers had erroneously claimed the DOH was imposing a ban on advertising. The Court noted that what the DOH was doing was to impose certain conditions on labels and promotions of infant formulas. In accordance with several resolutions from the WHO, the DOH's new rules state that "all health and nutrition claims for products within the scope of this Code are absolutely prohibited." The companies can certainly advertise but no longer with those ridiculous claims about IQ.

Section 7 of the new implementing rules recognizes that breast milk substitutes might sometimes be "medically indicated" but in such cases, "the use of breast milk substitutes is proper if based on complete and updated information." That will include, for example, information on "the health hazards of unnecessary or improper use of infant formula . . . including information that powdered infant formula may contain pathogenic microorganisms and must be prepared and used appropriately."

The new implementing rules also qualify that promotions of products must be "objective," which means advertising should not undermine breast milk or breastfeeding and that they "should not directly or indirectly suggest that buying their product would produce better individuals, or resulting in greater love, intelligence, ability, harmony or in any manner bring better health to the baby or other such exaggerated and unsubstantiated claim."

What the Court did overturn was the inclusion in the new rules of administrative fines on milk manufacturers violating the Code. It pointed out that the earlier Milk Code rules already had penalties which the DOH can use against erring companies.

For too long now, these drug companies (which manufacture these milk formulas) have tried to evade state regulations by invoking free enterprise. The latest Court decision sternly reminds them that "trade must be subjected to some form of regulation for the public good. Public interest must be upheld over business interests."

The ball is now in the DOH's court. The temporary restraining order has been lifted so it can now implement its new rules and regulations. I hope we will see an end to false and misleading advertising, especially around children's IQ. But more than that, we will need to see more efforts to promote breastfeeding itself, and to look for other ways to create the conditions for mothers to breastfeed. With the short maternity leave, and the lack of supportive breastfeeding policies in many work places, we have a long way to go to get mothers to do exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of a child's life, as recommended by the WHO and Unicef.

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LETTERS

'We can't move on until she moves out'

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S SILENCE ON the reported Malacañang "cash gifts" follows the same pattern as the "Hello Garci" scandal.

Recall how she remained silent for days on the Garci tapes, leaving her underlings to do the talking. Then, it was Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez who did most of the talking. Now it's de facto political adviser Ronaldo Puno and Acting Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera who have their mouths full.

Can you dig a justice secretary immediately proclaiming "there's nothing wrong" with millions of pesos changing hands inside the office and official residence of the President? Like her predecessor, Devanadera thinks the job of the justice secretary is to defend the President even if it means committing the gravest injustice against 82 million Filipinos.

If GMA had absolutely nothing to do with the alleged bribery, she would have immediately denounced it to high heavens (as any innocent person would do), and fired every Malacañang functionary responsible for the botched-up job. But she couldn't because that would mean denouncing herself.

So, as in the "Hello Garci" scandal, expect to see her in the coming days on national television again saying, "I'm sorry, I made a lapse in judgment. Let us move on."

But we can't move on unless she moves out.

—DING GENEROSO,
cigen@medobserver.com

For social change, not for VP De Castro

THIS REFERS TO THE NEWS ITEM WHICH reported that Maypagasa, a citizens group "identified with Vice President Noli de Castro" calls the pardon to be granted to Erap as a "rotten deal for the survival of a rotten government." (INQUIRER, 10/25/07)

We reiterate our stand that the pardon is indeed a rotten deal being hatched by the Palace for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's political survival. However, we deny that Maypagasa is "identified with the Vice President."

Certain people's organizations within Maypagasa might have supported De Castro in the 2004 polls, but not Maypagasa as a whole, which has no close association with the Vice President. We even have criticized him for his continued silence on the scandals hounding the administration and called for his resignation should he not say anything about those controversies. Maypagasa is a legitimate organization pushing for social change and not somebody's political career.

—ROEL GARCIA,
spokesperson, Maypagasa,
roelgarcia_772000@yahoo

No chemical waste from Dai Ichi factory

MAY I CLARIFY THE NEWS ITEM IN THE OCT. 4 issue of the INQUIRER that six persons in Pasig were hospitalized "after inhaling noxious chemicals from a nearby warehouse" of Dai Ichi which manufactures speakers and audio systems for export.

Dai Ichi uses the warehouse to manufacture not speakers but cabinets for speakers. There is no resulting "hazardous waste" because the only material used in cabinet-making is wood. Contrary to what the news item implied, the "containers of chemicals" found at the back of the warehouse were paint cans completely emptied of their contents, a fact that can be attested to by the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro), a representative of which came around to inspect the warehouse.

In the more than 30 years that Dai Ichi has been in business, this is the first time a complaint of this nature has come out. We wish to assure all concerned that Dai Ichi is aware of its corporate responsibility to the environment in which it operates.

—CARLOS L. GO,
general manager,
Dai Ichi Electronics Mfg. Co.,
Barangay Dela Paz, Pasig City

I don't know who in the Pasig City Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) Mr. Go talked to. Its chief, Racquel A. Naciongayo and her investigators, who inspected the site and responded to the residents' call, stand by their report that there were "several mounds of industrial wastes" found in that warehouse. In fact, the Cenro filed a criminal complaint against Dai Ichi last week for violating national and local laws pertaining to chemical waste disposal.

—KRISTINE L. ALAVE,
reporter, Inquirer

Militarization, Ipra are a scourge to lumad

WHILE MANILA'S MEDIA BUZZED WITH REports about the NBN scandal and Malacañang payoffs, an assembly of lumad leaders under the Pasaka Confederation of Lumad Organizations in Southern Mindanao was taking place in Davao City.

At the meeting, lumad leaders from the Mandaya, Mansaka, D'babawon, Ata-Manobo, Ata-Matigsalog, Tagabawa, Obo-Manobo, B'laan and Bagobo tribes articulated the greater challenges they face in their struggle to defend their ancestral lands. They cited intrusions into their lands by foreign corporate interest groups through plantations, mining, logging and dam projects. Their other common problems were militarization and the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (Ipra).

It was not hard for them to connect militarization and foreign corporate interests. They are harassed by the military as they assert the boundaries of their ancestral lands which have been marked by their traditional laws and respected by community members and neighbors. These are the same areas targeted by foreign corporations for their projects.

The Ipra requires the lumad to register their claims to their ancestral land before they are given a deed of ownership. Funny. The lumad were here before us. It is the state who should recognize the indigenous peoples' right to their ancestral lands. In fact, as one lumad commented, they were here even before God. Indeed, they were here long before the Spanish *conquistadores* brought along their Christian God.

More contentious about the Ipra is that it introduces the concept of private land ownership, contradicting the indigenous peoples' concept of land as communal property for the common good. The process creates a new breed of a few landed elites, who could easily do a sellout to advance their own personal interests.

The lumad are unfazed. They ended the assembly united, determined and confident in their struggle to defend their ancestral lands and their culture. Bravo! The lumad are Filipinos. They are one of us. Their victory is ours too, and the country will be in a much better shape if we are one, like them.

—JULIE L. PO,
Concerned Artists of the Philippines,
39 Scout Bayoran, Quezon City

NBN needed for progress

IT IS SO DISHEARTENING THAT ALLEGATIONS of bribery and overpricing have obscured the merits of the National Broadband Network (NBN) project. I believe that a government should have its own broadband network—not to compete with the private sector, but to serve the ICT (information and communications technology) needs of public administration.

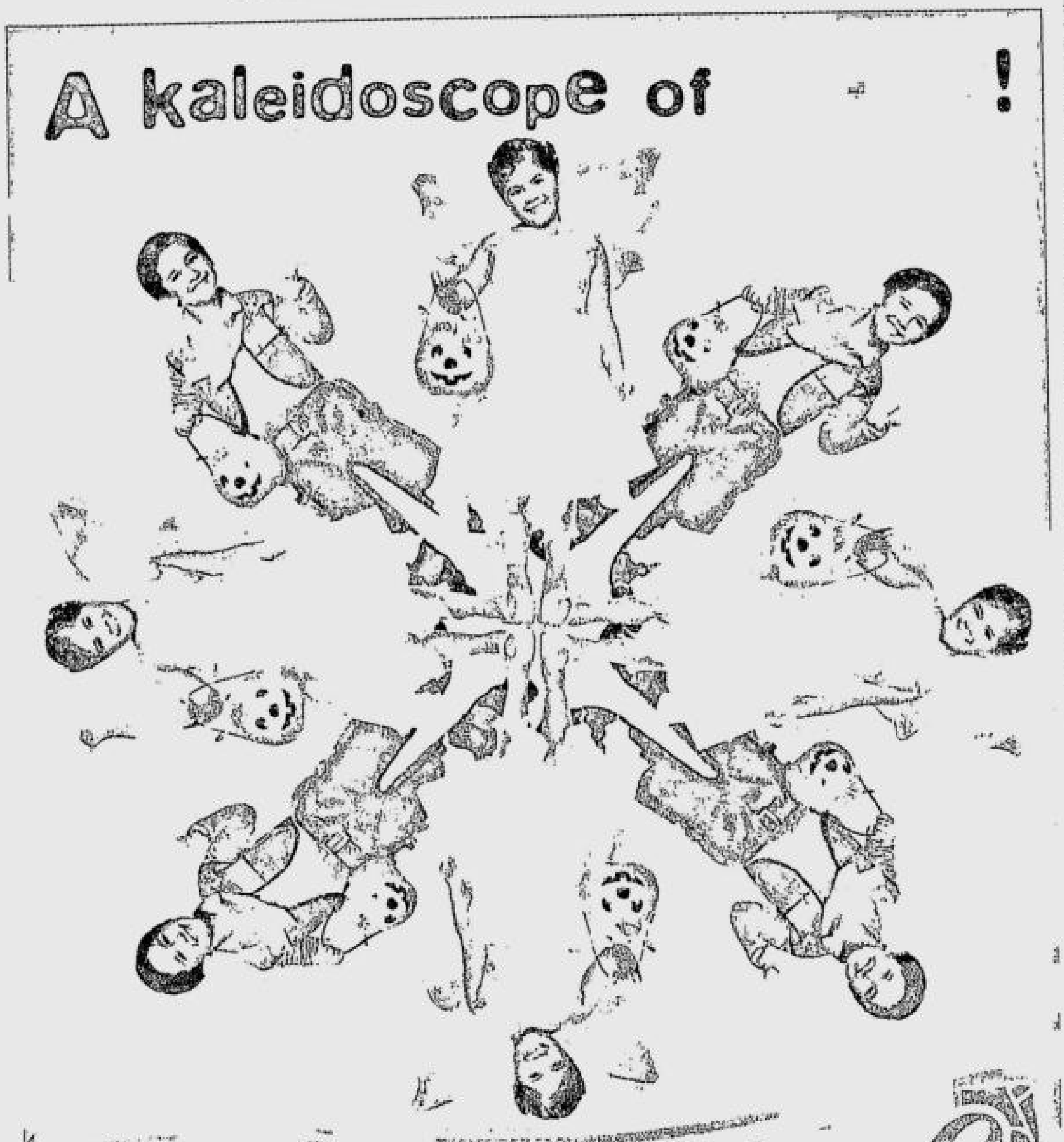
No country in this modern time has been able to accelerate its march to progress without an e-government, meaning, without using computers, Internet, Wi-Fi, wimax, etc. in an integrated and collaborative manner. Our country was one of the very first in Asia to pass a legal framework, the e-Commerce Act, for the promotion of ICT not only in the private but also in the public sector. But now, we find ourselves at the tail-end. ICT is the primary tool that modern countries use to re-engineer their governments.

We complain why rebels have more powerful weapons and our soldiers are left with outdated armaments. We do the same to our government if we don't allow it to have the best tools at its disposal to serve the public better. We complain why our government agencies are not as fast and efficient compared to those of other countries, like South Korea and Taiwan, where the quality of public service is at par with that of the private sector's. We are surprised that the economies of Thailand and Malaysia are looking up. And I'm afraid Vietnam's economy will soon overtake ours. But this is so simply because they are very aggressive in making sure that their governments have access to the same technologies available to the private sector. The use of ICT in the public sector is a huge and risky investment, but it has been proven to accelerate national progress and development.

I only pray that once the dust churned up by the NBN controversy settles, and the culprits in the alleged bribery and overpricing have been prosecuted and punished, our public officials, including our senators, will find time to help us establish this broadband network and achieve the same status as the other countries that have benefited from such infrastructure.

We need an NBN for the public sector, if we wish to see our country progress and become a First World economy. It doesn't matter from whose idea or from what administration this project will finally take off. The important thing is, we need to have this network for our government, for our country and for the future generations.

—JINGLE ALLAM, jc_sen8@yahoo.com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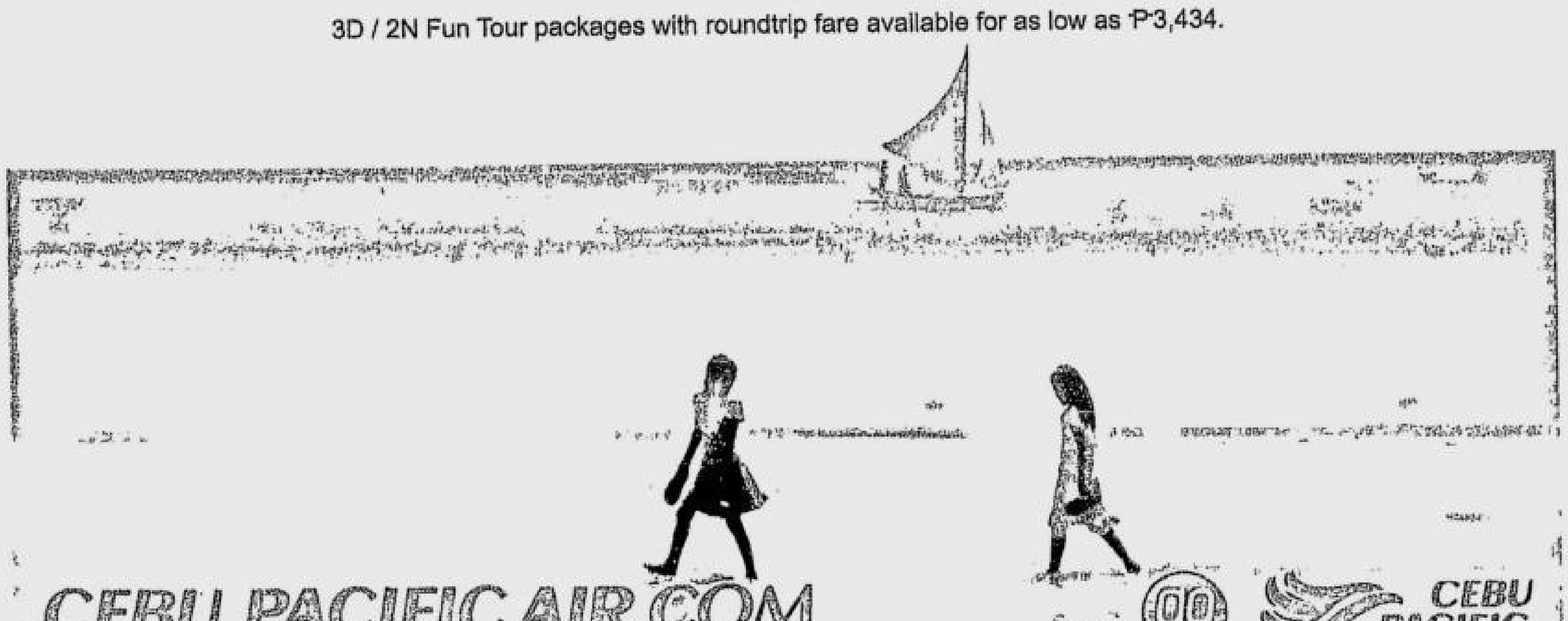

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JDV confirms death threats on his life and son Joey III

By Norman Bordadora and Riza T. Olchondra

SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA JR. has confirmed reports that there are threats not only to the life of his son and namesake but also to his own.

"As a matter of fact, I am planning to write the President ... (to) confirm the threat," De Venecia said in a telephone interview on Wednesday night.

De Venecia made the confirmation to the INQUIRER on the eve of his son's return to the witness stand at the Senate, which is investigating the controversial $329-million contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project awarded to China's ZTE Corp.

The Speaker's son, Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, has reported the plot to kill him to the Makati police. Asked if he himself had received similar threats, De Venecia said, "Yes."

His wife Gina said a congressman, "who is close to us," called on Tuesday evening to inform the Speaker of threats to his life.

"This congressman who is close to us called up. He said a relative of his called to tell him not to be seen in public with the Speaker," Gina said over the phone.

"A prison inmate, he was told, had already been released to implement the plot against JDV. (The relative was warning the congressman that) he might also get hurt (in the slay try)," she added.

The couple would not readily name those behind the plot against the Speaker but their revelations came after Joey de Venecia disclosed a slay plot allegedly relayed to the family by retired Lt. Gen. Jaime de los Santos.

Joey said that the threats to his life came about because his exposé led to the cancellation of the NBN deal that cost some personalities millions of pesos in commissions.

It was Joey who said that Benjamin Abalos Sr. brokered the ZTE deal in exchange for commissions and that the then Commission on Elections chair offered him $10 million in December 2006 so his company would withdraw its project proposal.

DE VENECIA

Joey also claimed that the President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, shoved a finger at him and told him to "back off" from the project.

The younger De Venecia said those behind the plot against him included Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza and Assistant Secretary Reynaldo Berroya. Both officials have since denied being part of any assassination plot.

Mendoza denied anew any involvement in an alleged plot to kill Joey and his father.

"He (Joey) is imagining things. That is not true. I'm not that kind of person," Mendoza said in Filipino at a roundtable session with the INQUIRER on Wednesday night.

"The person Joey identified as his source (De los Santos) talked to me just this morning. He said they met through Lambino. They exchanged cards and he was invited to the Speaker's house. There they talked about 'moral regeneration.' He said there was no talk of an assassination attempt," Mendoza said.

Asked about Joey's claim that he was present when De los Santos gave the information on the threat to Joey's life, the Speaker said: "It's confirmed."

De los Santos, the De Venecias' supposed informer, himself denied having relayed the information to the younger De Venecia.

"They may have frightened him because he is an upright, highly respected Filipino general with international experience," the Speaker said when told about De los Santos' denial.

Gina said she was around when De los Santos told the story about the plan allegedly being hatched by Mendoza and Berroya, both former police officials.

"(General De los Santos) went to the house and he met with Joe, Joey and (De Venecia's legal counsel) (Raul) Lambino," Gina said.

"At first, they talked among themselves.... Later, Joe called me to join them. Then General De los Santos told the story. I suppose he already told them the story (before I joined them)," she added.

The Speaker's wife said she was worried for her family.

"It's the price we have to pay for the truth," Gina said. "Of course, I am worried for my family."

Gina said she had reason to believe that she too was being followed. "That's why even I was already given (a) backup (security vehicle)," she said. According to her she no longer goes out at night.

Mike says Joey's accusations 'no longer amusing'

SAYING THAT HE FOUND the latest accusations against him "no longer amusing," Jose Miguel Arroyo, the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo, asked the Senate to stop Jose "Joey" de Venecia III from further testifying at its hearings on the ZTE deal.

Arroyo denied that he was involved in the deal won by China's ZTE Corp. or that he was promised anything.

"I maintain that I do not meddle in governance," he said in a statement.

He said De Venecia had been engaging in a "defamatory campaign against me."

After saying at his first testimony in the Senate that the President was not involved in the deal, "all of a sudden, she is involved and this time, I was expecting a bribe," Arroyo said.

He said there was no reason De Venecia could not have disclosed these when he first testified and thus, this only showed that "this is a continuing fairy tale he makes up as he goes along."

MIKE ARROYO

"I appeal to the Senate to prevent De Venecia from further making a travesty of its proceedings," Arroyo said.

"And I challenge De Venecia to either put up with competent evidence or have the decency to shut up," he said.

Christine O. Avendaño

Joey's NBN bid illegal, say DOTC execs

From page A1

Asked why De Venecia might have thought that he could win the project with an unsolicited proposal, Formoso said, "I don't know. He went to Neda (National Economic and Development Authority) first. In my understanding he should have gone to the DOTC (Department of Transportation and Communication) first.

"He just came to us with a prepared endorsement letter ... It was not a comfort letter. It was an endorsement letter which he wanted signed," Formoso said.

"But the DOTC could not evaluate his proposal anyway because it was incomplete," he said. "So we passed it on to Neda."

Formoso also clarified reports that ZTE Corp.'s proposal was being evaluated by the time AHI made a submission to DOTC.

DOTC documents show that ZTE submitted its proposal under a government-to-government arrangement months ahead of AHI's own unsolicited proposal. ZTE is the company chosen by the Chinese government to undertake the NBN project, which China would finance through its official development assistance.

Because of the controversy generated by De Venecia's allegations that the ZTE deal was overpriced and was marred by offers of bribery, President Macapagal-Arroyo scrapped on Oct. 2 the ZTE deal.

Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza earlier said at a forum that despite the cancellation of the NBN deal with ZTE, the government still needed to provide broadband access to government agencies nationwide, down to the barangay (village) offices.

"The DOTC's exploratory talks (with telcos) started Oct. 9. It [focused] on how the government can lower the government's ballooning telecom expenses," he said.

Mendoza said the DOTC had formed a technical working group to flesh out the telecom needs of the government and to see how the private sector could meet them at the best price possible.

MENDOZA

The government's telecommunication project generally seeks to interconnect government offices down to the municipal level.

Mendoza said the secure interconnection of government offices was mandated by the E-Commerce Law and by the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan for the period 2004 to 2010, as well as the digital infrastructure component of President Macapagal-Arroyo's 10-point agenda.

Status

As to the status of the DOTC plan to implement the NBN project through local telecommunications companies, Formoso said the timeline for the bidding may be finalized before the year ends.

"What [local telcos] have is the list of the specific requirements and the quality of service needed. Like for central offices we need at least 2 mbps connection. That is the committed rate and not the burst speed. For provincial offices it is 1 mbps and for barangay offices it is down to 256 kbps," he said.

So far, only Philippine Chamber of Telecommunication Operators, Inc. has submitted its comments on the NBN.

Smart, Globe, Digitel and Bayantel are expected to give their comments by next week.

"The government will then, taking all of these into consideration, prepare the terms of reference. We will then tender it. Then they will submit (their offers)," Formoso said.

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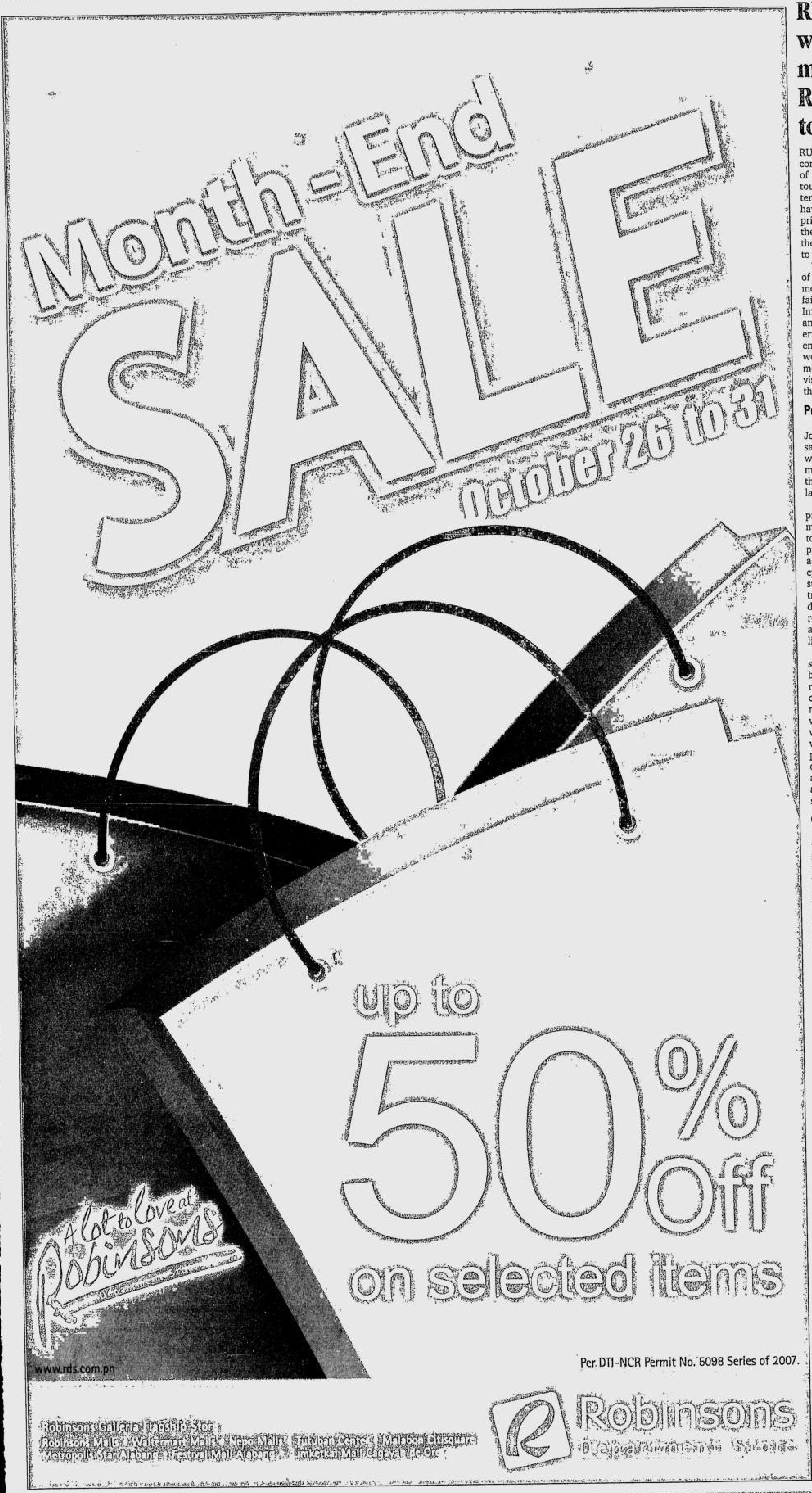

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RP lays welcome mat for Russian tourists

RUSSIA HAS BECOME the new focus of the country's tourism program after its nationals have been given the privilege of entering the country without the hassle of having to obtain a visa.

The Department of Tourism, Department of Foreign Affairs and Bureau of Immigration have announced the government's visa-free entry program would be implemented for Russian visitors beginning this month.

Promote tourism

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said the new policy would encourage more tourists to visit the country, particularly Russians.

"We expect the privilege will attract more Russian visitors to the Philippines," Durano said, adding that the policy would also strengthen the country's travel trade industry and boost the revenues of hotel and leisure establishments.

Durano said Russian tourists and businessmen may now stay in the country for a maximum of 21 days without a visa, provided they have valid tickets to their port of origin or port of next destination and their passports are valid for the next six months.

Crucial market

He said a Russian visitor wishing to stay in the country more than 21 days would need to secure a temporary visitor visa with the BI.

"The Russian market is a very crucial market to explore. The new policy will greatly enhance their experience in our islands," Durano said.

Durano invited Russian nationals to visit the Philippines during the Otdykh-Leisure 2007 Travel Fair held in Moscow.

The DOT, with its partners in the travel trade sector, has also completed a selling mission in Far East Russia to explore business and tourism opportunities in the region.

Biggest source

In line with this, Vladavia Air Company has opened regular weekly charter flights using a 150-seat TU-154 airplane to Manila from Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, the major gateway in Far East Russia.

The DOT has reported that from January to August 2007, tourist arrivals from Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) grew by 7.2 percent compared to the same period last year. They are currently the Philippines' seventh biggest source of tourists from the European region. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

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TONETTE T. OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

Gov't, MILF panels break talks deadlock

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Eid Kabalu, civil-military affairs chief of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), said the panels had managed to hurdle the contentious issue on territory.

No details

Retired Gen. Rodolfo Garcia headed the government panel that met with the MILF team, led by Mohagher Iqbal since Tuesday.

But Kabalu declined to give details on how the problem was solved.

"Basically, that's the result of their meeting. As to how they were able to break it, we will know when both parties formally issue their joint statement," Kabalu said.

With the deadlock broken, formal negotiations may resume next month, he said.

"It was a breakthrough," Jesus Dureza, presidential adviser on the peace process, also said when asked about the result of the Kuala Lumpur talks.

New entity

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The MILF has demanded the inclusion of at least 1,000 villages in the BJE without any precondition, but the government said only about 600 villages could be provisionally included in the Moro territory. *Jeoffrey Maitem and Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

People power launched vs mayors' quarry law

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—FOUR CIVIL SOCIETY groups in Pampanga have started using the local initiative, a process that recognizes the role of the electorate in lawmaking, in a bid to repeal an ordinance that changes the ways in how the province's multimillion-peso quarry industry is managed.

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At least 1,000 signatures of registered voters are needed to file the petition with the provincial board, Irwin Nucum, Kami spokesperson, said.

Nucum said his group had availed itself of the remedy after the board overrode the veto of Gov. Eddie Panlilio on Ordinance No. 176 that abolished the P150 administrative fee on every truckload of sand and increased the tax to P300.

Sharing scheme

Under the new ordinance, the tax will be distributed on a 30-30-40 percent sharing among the province, towns and barangays from where the sand is taken.

Its provisions require quarry operators to form municipal and provincial federations from which a representative will be designated to collect the tax and issue the receipts.

Non-membership in the federations is a basis by the mayors to cancel the quarry operations permits, which are issued by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau for sites over five hectares and by the governor for sites under five hectares.

Panlilio said he vetoed the ordinance because its enactment was contrary to the provisions of national laws, such as Republic Act No. 7160, Mining Act of 1995 (RA 7942) and the People's Small-scale Mining Act of 1991 (RA 7076).

Veto reasons

According to him, the abolition of the administrative fee leaves the governor's office without money to check on irregularities.

The provincial government maintains almost 200 personnel in more than 30 checkpoints to stop the recycling of receipts or use of fake ones. They also monitor illegal quarry operations.

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Ate Vi admits 'jueteng' persists in Batangas

BATANGAS CITY—MORE THAN four months after she took over leadership of the province from suspected "jueteng" lord Armand Sanchez, Gov. Vilma Santos-Recto admitted that operations of the illegal numbers game had persisted in many areas of the province.

"Yes, there's still jueteng in Batangas. (The police) described it as guerrilla-type operations," Recto told the INQUIRER on Wednesday when asked if she knew about the alleged revival of jueteng in Batangas.

Her disclosure practically dispelled the contention of Senior Supt. David Quimio, provincial police director, to reporters in a dialogue almost two weeks ago that the underground lottery draws had been completely stopped.

Quimio, who was the city police chief of Lipa when Recto was still mayor, even boasted of arresting over a dozen people in the anti-illegal gambling operations since September.

"*Huwag tayong magmagaling* (Let's not be too cocky). Eradicating jueteng is not that easy. It's a tedious process. But as I had said before, I have directed our policemen to do everything to stop it. We will also need the cooperation of everybody, specially the mayors," Santos-Recto said.

"I cannot bring solution to this problem overnight."

Santos-Recto said the provincial government's campaign against all forms of gambling would only succeed once the province enjoys genuine economic development.

"If the people have jobs and have other things to do, they will not gamble on games of chance," she said.

In an earlier interview, Lipa Archbishop Ramos Arguelles said the gaming racket had not wavered even after Santos-Recto took her oath as governor.

Santos-Recto then assailed reports accusing her and her husband, former Sen. Ralph Recto, of conniving with operators and financiers to revive jueteng.

The allegations are just part of black propaganda being mounted by her political opponents "to put down my administration," she said.

Asked to comment about reports her husband had allowed the resurgence of jueteng in Batangas, she said: "God knows we're not involved in such things. But I will not back down from those who accuse me and my husband because I know I'm not guilty of anything."

Santos-Recto likewise said she had never met a person named Art Atayde, who supposedly initiated the revival of jueteng and sought the consent of her husband.

INQUIRER sources identified Atayde as a cousin of Ralph Recto. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

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1. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (SSS), through the *2007 Approved Budget for Consultancy Services*, intends to apply the sum of Four Million Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P4,500,000.00), being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Dedicated Survey of Customer Satisfaction of SSS members. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.
2. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and shortlisting for the *conduct of one (1) round of nationwide customer satisfaction survey of SSS members*. Interested consultants must submit their LOIs on or before **November 12, 2007** at the Bids & Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat 6th Floor, SSS Main Building, East avenue, Diliman Quezon City and secure therefrom Part 1 of the Bidding Documents consisting of the Eligibility Documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents on ***November 23, 2007 not later than 2:00 p.m. at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City***. Any Eligibility Documents submitted after the deadline shall be declared "Late" and shall not be accepted by the Bids and Awards. Committee. Only those who are eligible will be entitled to submit bids.
3. LOIs must be delivered by hand, through mail, or facsimile to the address below at 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on or before **November 12, 2007.**
4. The BAC shall draw up the list of eligible consultants from those who have submitted LOIs and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A).
5. Eligible consultants shall be invited to participate in the bidding for this project through a Letter of Intent to Bid issued by the BAC of the SSS.
6. Part II of the Bidding Documents shall be issued to eligible consultants from the address below upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of P2,500.00. The method of payment will be on a cash basis, payable at the SSS Cashiering Department, SSS Main Bldg., Ground Floor, upon accomplishment of the SSS Form R6. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective consultant or his authorized representative.
7. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 and is restricted unless otherwise stated to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. Only bids from eligible consultants will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

   The SSS shall evaluate bids based on **Quality-Cost Based Evaluation (QCBE)** procedure using a 60%-40% technical and cost rating computation. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instruction to Bidders.

   Evaluation of technical proposals shall include a Proof of Concept (PoC) of bidder's proposed survey plan and methodology based on selected features and data to be provided by SSS for this purpose.
8. Interested consultants may obtain further information from SSS at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
9. The contract shall be completed within one (1) year.
10. The SSS reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Bids without offering any reason, waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

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Inner Wheel Club	Oct. 28	Renaissance (New World) Makati City	524-9914/522-1864
Friends of CCP	Oct. 28	Intercon Hotel	817-3905
Karl Edwards	Oct. 27-28, Dec. 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 24-25	NBC Tent, The Fort, Taguig	372-8453/374-3726
American Women's Club	Nov. 5, Dec. 3	World Trade Center (WTC)	817-7587
Venture 7	Nov. 10 Dec. 2	Intercon Hotel Renaissance (New World)	819-3961/843-9507
Rotary Club of Makati	Nov. 11	Intercon Hotel, Makati City	819-2866
Ayala Alabang Village Bazaar	Nov. 17-18, Dec. 8-9, 15-16	Cuenca Court, Ayala Alabang	807-0511
Urban Bazaar	Nov. 16,17,18	Rockwell Tent, Makati City	898-1702
Rotary Club Makati West	Nov. 18	Intercon Hotel Makati City	753-098
Zonta Club Manila	Nov.18	Renaissance (New World) Makati City	928-0512/850-9147
Noel	Nov. 21-25	World Trade Center (WTC)	687-2955
International Bazaar	Nov. 25	PICC	832-4000
Assumption Bazaar	Nov. 25	Intercon Hotel, Makati City	894-3561
St. James Bazaar	Nov. 30, Dec. 1-2	Cuenca Court, Ayala Alabang	842-5140/807-1623
Ex-Link's Mega Xmas Expo	Dec. 14, 15-16	SM Mega Mall, Hall 2	643-3887/640-7439
World Bazaar Festival	Dec. 6-16	World Trade Center (WTC)	531-6350
Noel	Dec. 21-23	World Trade Center (WTC)	687-2955

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Teachers complain of low election pay

CABANATUAN CITY—Public schoolteachers assigned to election duties on Oct. 29 have complained that their allowances had been reduced yet the amount of work for the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections would be more tedious than the May 14 polls.

They will receive P2,000, or P1,000 lower than the amount given in May, and P300 more in transportation allowance.

Belen Rivera, election officer of Gapan City, said the small allowance was the common complaint of teachers during the briefings for members of the board of election inspectors (BEI).

SOLDIERS guard ballot boxes being prepared for the barangay and youth council elections.

INQUIRER PHOTO

"They were vocal in voicing their complaint ... I just told them that the allotment earmarked was lower this time and I appealed to their usual sense of cooperation," she said.

She said everyone expected more voters would be going to the precincts this time and that candidates, their watchers and relatives would be keenly watching the proceedings.

Records at the provincial Commission on Elections showed that registered voters in Nueva Ecija increased from 1,077,255 to 1,189,076. The number of voters in the SK elections reached 79,296 in the province.

As the campaign heats up, complaints about violations of Comelec rules on common poster areas and partisanship abound.

Moises Soriano, a retired Army colonel running for barangay chair in Camp Tinio here, told Comelec officials that the barangay hall, the only common poster area in their community, was exclusively used by only one candidate.

The Comelec in Eastern Visayas remained confident that the elections would be peaceful despite reports that rebels were out to disrupt the polls in four Northern Samar towns.

Elections regional director Adolfo Ibañez said police and military authorities had assured voters of their safety. Military reports alleged that the New People's Army would sabotage the polls in Mapanas, Silvino Lubos, Gamay and Palapag.

Ibañez said some sectors had recommended the suspension of elections in the four towns but the Comelec, police and military decided against it during a command conference at the PNP regional headquarters in Camp Ruperto Kangleon in Palo, Leyte, on Tuesday.

"We cannot just cancel the elections. Otherwise, it will create an impression that we are not in control," Ibañez said.

"If we will cancel the elections there, it is as if we are surrendering to (the rebels)," he said. *Anselmo Roque, Inquirer Central Luzon and Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas*

NEWSBRIEFS

Town targets 2,000 trees

CALATAGAN, Batangas—Hundreds of residents of this town will plant 2,000 seedlings of golden shower and fire trees.

Environment officials said the municipal environment office had already planted 200 seedlings on Oct. 15 and would plant 35 trees per week to reach their 2,000 target for the year.

Calatagan, a third-class municipality (annual income: P21 million-P27 million) is popular for its white sand beach resorts.

Marlon Alexander Luistro, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Wanted: More forest guards

BATANGAS CITY—Officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said they need more men to guard the 65,000-hectare protected landscape of Taal Volcano.

Laudemir Salac, protected areas supervisor, said the agency only had five men to guard the area.

Salac said he would ask mayors of towns around the lake to deploy one warden each to make up for the manpower lack.

The foresters will be trained by the DENR and their salaries will come from the municipal governments until the department generates sufficient income from fees imposed on visitors of Taal volcano and lake.

Marlon Alexander Luistro, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Village officials killed

SULTAN MASTURA, Shariff Kabunsuan—A reelectionist village official was killed while a councilor was wounded in an ambush by unidentified gunmen on Oct. 18.

Supt. Ismael Ali, provincial police chief, said Senditan Village chair Hadji Akmad Abdullah and councilor Monib Ali were on their way home on Thursday when they were shot.

Abdullah died on the spot while Ali was brought to a hospital in nearby Cotabato City, he said.

Ali said police believed the attack was related to the upcoming barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections.

Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao

Drug gang seen in slaying

SAN PEDRO, Laguna—Members of a local drug syndicate could be behind the killing of a former correspondent of Today newspaper in Barangay Cuyab here over the weekend, a police official said Monday.

Police identified the victim as Edward Pelayo, 40, of Sampaguita Homes, Barangay Sampaguita, San Pedro town.

Supt. Jolly Dizon, town police chief, said the victim, who had worked as a correspondent of the defunct Today newspaper, was also a civilian intelligence agent of the police.

He said Pelayo usually provided them with information about the activities of personalities suspected of being involved in illegal drugs in San Pedro. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

'Salvagings' won't stop drug trade

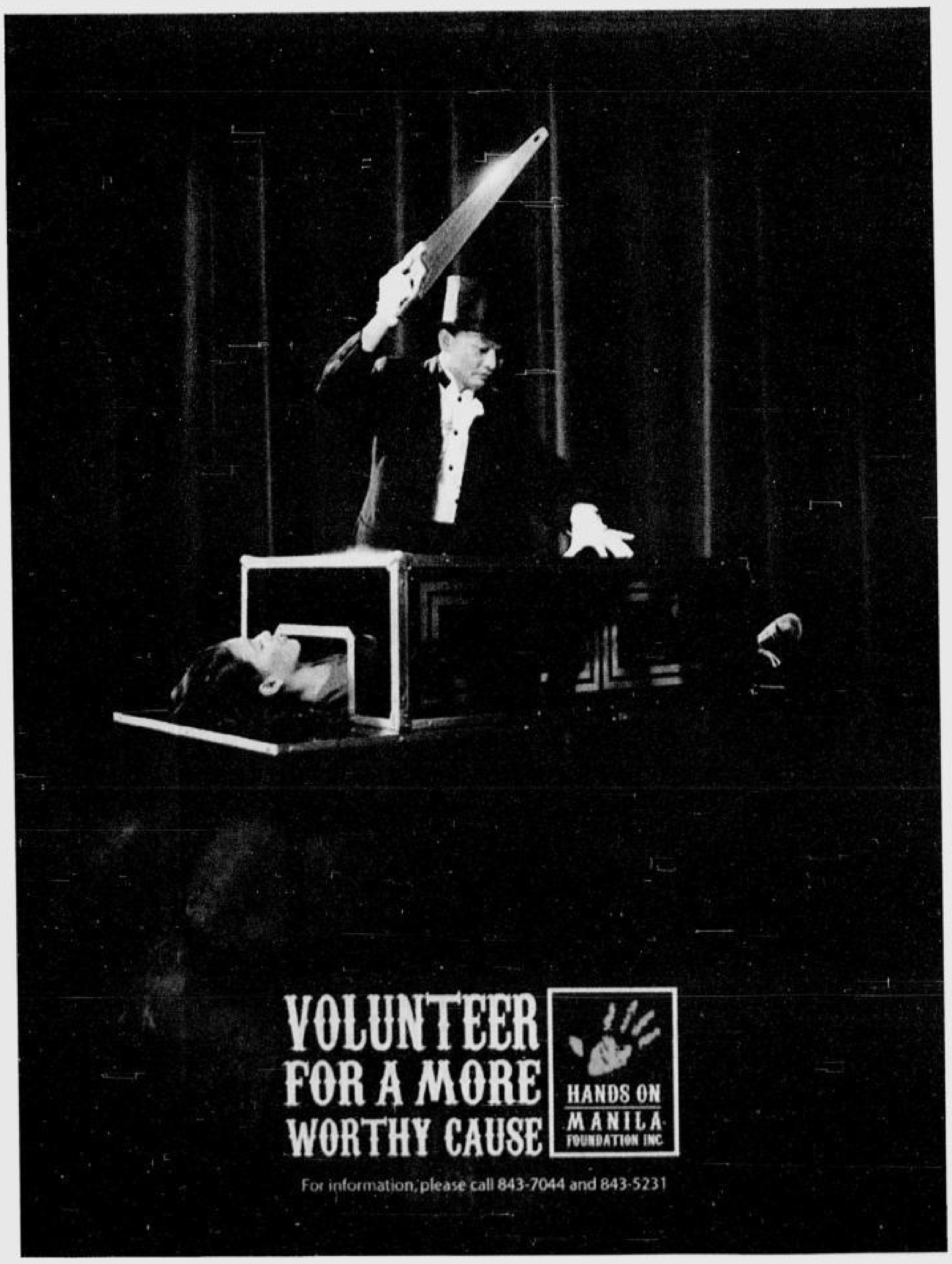
DAVAO CITY—Summary executions of suspected criminals here have failed to deter drug pushers from continuing with their trade.

On Wednesday, police arrested three suspected illegal drug pushers on separate occasions.

SPO3 Edgar Fernandez of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) said the first to fall was Glen Siega, 25, of Sandawa Avenue, who yielded 0.05 grams of suspected methamphetamine hydrochloride during a buy-bust operation.

At around 9:30 p.m., Fernandez said the PDEA again conducted a buy-bust operation in Toril District and arrested Edgardo Tagulema, 47, and Rene Boy Rosario, 31.

Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao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BATANGAS CITY—MORE THAN four months after she took over leadership of the province from suspected "jueteng" lord Armand Sanchez, Gov. Vilma Santos-Recto admitted that operations of the illegal numbers game had persisted in many areas of the province.

"Yes, there's still jueteng in Batangas. (The police) described it as guerrilla-type operations," Recto told the INQUIRER on Wednesday when asked if she knew about the alleged revival of jueteng in Batangas.

Her disclosure practically dispelled the contention of Senior Supt. David Quimio, provincial police director, to reporters in a dialogue almost two weeks ago that the underground lottery draws had been completely stopped.

Quimio, who was the city police chief of Lipa when Recto was still mayor, even boasted of arresting over a dozen people in the anti-illegal gambling operations since September.

"*Huwag tayong magmagaling* (Let's not be too cocky). Eradicating jueteng is not that easy. It's a tedious process. But as I had said before, I have directed our policemen to do everything to stop it. We will also need the cooperation of everybody, specially the mayors," Santos-Recto said.

"I cannot bring solution to this problem overnight."

Santos-Recto said the provincial government's campaign against all forms of gambling would only succeed once the province enjoys genuine economic development.

"If the people have jobs and have other things to do, they will not gamble on games of chance," she said.

In an earlier interview, Lipa Archbishop Ramos Arguelles said the gaming racket had not wavered even after Santos-Recto took her oath as governor.

Santos-Recto then assailed reports accusing her and her husband, former Sen. Ralph Recto, of conniving with operators and financiers to revive jueteng.

The allegations are just part of black propaganda being mounted by her political opponents "to put down my administration," she said.

Asked to comment about reports her husband had allowed the resurgence of jueteng in Batangas, she said: "God knows we're not involved in such things. But I will not back down from those who accuse me and my husband because I know I'm not guilty of anything."

Santos-Recto likewise said she had never met a person named Art Atayde, who supposedly initiated the revival of jueteng and sought the consent of her husband.

INQUIRER sources identified Atayde as a cousin of Ralph Recto. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
IAEB No.2007-004-Consulting

DEDICATED SURVEY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF SSS MEMBERS

The bid aims to engage the services of a Consultant to undertake the survey of SSS members on their satisfaction on SSS services, policies and programs

1. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (SSS), through the *2007 Approved Budget for Consultancy Services*, intends to apply the sum of Four Million Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P4,500,000.00), being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Dedicated Survey of Customer Satisfaction of SSS members. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.
2. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and shortlisting for the *conduct of one (1) round of nationwide customer satisfaction survey of SSS members*. Interested consultants must submit their LOIs on or before **November 12, 2007** at the Bids & Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat 6th Floor, SSS Main Building, East avenue, Diliman Quezon City and secure therefrom Part 1 of the Bidding Documents consisting of the Eligibility Documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents on ***November 23, 2007 not later than 2:00 p.m. at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.*** Any Eligibility Documents submitted after the deadline shall be declared "Late" and shall not be accepted by the Bids and Awards Committee. Only those who are eligible will be entitled to submit bids.
3. LOIs must be delivered by hand, through mail, or facsimile to the address below at 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on or before **November 12, 2007.**
4. The BAC shall draw up the list of eligible consultants from those who have submitted LOIs and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A).
5. Eligible consultants shall be invited to participate in the bidding for this project through a Letter of Intent to Bid issued by the BAC of the SSS.
6. Part II of the Bidding Documents shall be issued to eligible consultants from the address below upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of P2,500.00. The method of payment will be on a cash basis, payable at the SSS Cashiering Department, SSS Main Bldg., Ground Floor, upon accomplishment of the SSS Form R6. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective consultant or his authorized representative.
7. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 and is restricted unless otherwise stated to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. Only bids from eligible consultants will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

   The SSS shall evaluate bids based on **Quality-Cost Based Evaluation (QCBE)** procedure using a 60%-40% technical and cost rating computation. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instruction to Bidders.

   Evaluation of technical proposals shall include a Proof of Concept (PoC) of bidder's proposed survey plan and methodology based on selected features and data to be provided by SSS for this purpose.
8. Interested consultants may obtain further information from SSS at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
9. The contract shall be completed within one (1) year.
10. The SSS reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Bids without offering any reason, waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

Bids and Awards Committee
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East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel # 922-2991; 924-7380; 920-6401 local 5491
Email – bac@sss.gov.ph
Facsimile number – (02) 924-7380

(Sgd.) THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI – October 26, 2007)

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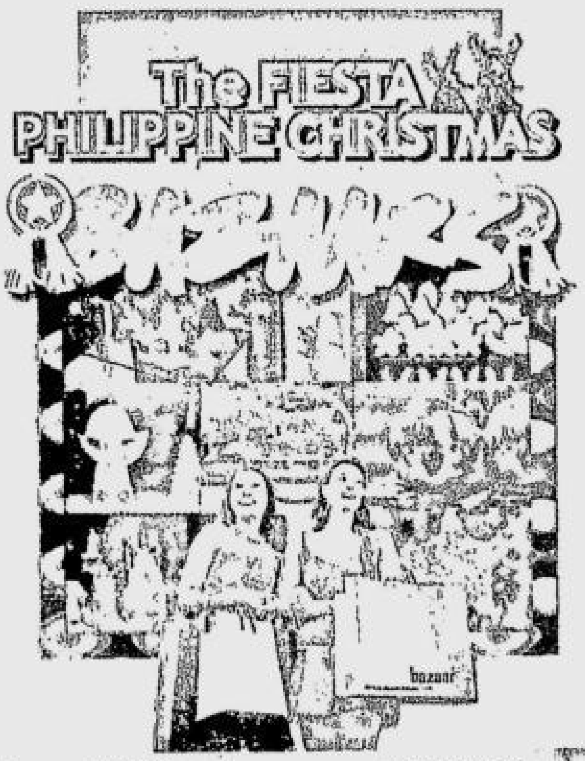

BAZAAR	DATES	VENUE	CONTACT
Ex-Link's Negosyo Expo Season 2	Oct. 28	Hall 2, Bldg. B, SM Mega Mall	643-3887/640-7439
Inner Wheel Club	Oct. 28	Renaissance (New World) Makati City	524-9914/522-1864
Friends of CCP	Oct. 28	Intercon Hotel	817-3905
Karl Edwards	Oct. 27-28, Dec. 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 24-25	NBC Tent, The Fort, Taguig	372-8453/374-3726
American Women's Club	Nov. 5, Dec. 3	World Trade Center (WTC)	817-7587
Venture 7	Nov. 10 Dec. 2	Intercon Hotel Renaissance (New World)	819-3961/843-9507
Rotary Club of Makati	Nov. 11	Intercon Hotel, Makati City	819-2866
Ayala Alabang Village Bazaar	Nov. 17-18, Dec. 8-9, 15-16	Cuenca Court, Ayala Alabang	807-0511
Urban Bazaar	Nov. 16,17,18	Rockwell Tent, Makati City	898-1702
Rotary Club Makati West	Nov. 18	Intercon Hotel Makati City	753-098
Zonta Club Manila	Nov.18	Renaissance (New World) Makati City	928-0512/850-9147
Noel	Nov. 21-25	World Trade Center (WTC)	687-2955
International Bazaar	Nov. 25	PICC	832-4000
Assumption Bazaar	Nov. 25	Intercon Hotel, Makati City	894-3561
St. James Bazaar	Nov. 30, Dec. 1-2	Cuenca Court, Ayala Alabang	842-5140/807-1623
Ex-Link's Mega Xmas Expo	Dec. 14, 15-16	SM Mega Mall, Hall 2	643-3887/640-7439
World Bazaar Festival	Dec. 6-16	World Trade Center (WTC)	531-6350
Noel	Dec. 21-23	World Trade Center (WTC)	687-2955

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Teachers complain of low election pay

CABANATUAN CITY—Public schoolteachers assigned to election duties on Oct. 29 have complained that their allowances had been reduced yet the amount of work for the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections would be more tedious than the May 14 polls.

They will receive P2,000, or P1,000 lower than the amount given in May, and P300 more in transportation allowance.

Belen Rivera, election officer of Gapan City, said the small allowance was the common complaint of teachers during the briefings for members of the board of election inspectors (BEI).

"They were vocal in voicing their complaint ... I just told them that the allotment earmarked was lower this time and I appealed to their usual sense of cooperation," she said.

She said everyone expected more voters would be going to the precincts this time and that candidates, their watchers and relatives would be keenly watching the proceedings.

Records at the provincial Commission on Elections showed that registered voters in Nueva Ecija increased from 1,077,255 to 1,189,076. The number of voters in the SK elections reached 79,296 in the province.

As the campaign heats up, complaints about violations of Comelec rules on common poster areas and partisanship abound.

Moises Soriano, a retired Army colonel running for barangay chair in Camp Tinio here, told Comelec officials that the barangay hall, the only common poster area in their community, was exclusively used by only one candidate.

The Comelec in Eastern Visayas remained confident that the elections would be peaceful despite reports that rebels were out to disrupt the polls in four Northern Samar towns.

Elections regional director Adolfo Ibañez said police and military authorities had assured voters of their safety. Military reports alleged that the New People's Army would sabotage the polls in Mapanas, Silvino Lubos, Gamay and Palapag.

Ibañez said some sectors had recommended the suspension of elections in the four towns but the Comelec, police and military decided against it during a command conference at the PNP regional headquarters in Camp Ruperto Kangleon in Palo, Leyte, on Tuesday.

"We cannot just cancel the elections. Otherwise, it will create an impression that we are not in control," Ibañez said.

"If we will cancel the elections there, it is as if we are surrendering to (the rebels)," he said. *Anselmo Roque, Inquirer Central Luzon and Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas*

SOLDIERS guard ballot boxes being prepared for the barangay and youth council elections.

INQUIRER PHOTO

NEWSBRIEFS

Town targets 2,000 trees

CALATAGAN, Batangas—Hundreds of residents of this town will plant 2,000 seedlings of golden shower and fire trees.

Environment officials said the municipal environment office had already planted 200 seedlings on Oct. 15 and would plant 35 trees per week to reach their 2,000 target for the year.

Calatagan, a third-class municipality (annual income: P21 million-P27 million) is popular for its white sand beach resorts.

Marlon Alexander Luistro, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Wanted: More forest guards

BATANGAS CITY—Officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said they need more men to guard the 65,000-hectare protected landscape of Taal Volcano.

Laudemir Salac, protected areas supervisor, said the agency only had five men to guard the area.

Salac said he would ask mayors of towns around the lake to deploy one warden each to make up for the manpower lack.

The foresters will be trained by the DENR and their salaries will come from the municipal governments until the department generates sufficient income from fees imposed on visitors of Taal volcano and lake.

Marlon Alexander Luistro, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Village officials killed

SULTAN MASTURA, Shariff Kabunsuan—A reelectionist village official was killed while a councilor was wounded in an ambush by unidentified gunmen on Oct. 18.

Supt. Ismael Ali, provincial police chief, said Senditan Village chair Hadji Akmad Abdullah and councilor Monib Ali were on their way home on Thursday when they were shot.

Abdullah died on the spot while Ali was brought to a hospital in nearby Cotabato City, he said.

Ali said police believed the attack was related to the upcoming barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections.

Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao

Drug gang seen in slaying

SAN PEDRO, Laguna—Members of a local drug syndicate could be behind the killing of a former correspondent of Today newspaper in Barangay Cuyab here over the weekend, a police official said Monday.

Police identified the victim as Edward Pelayo, 40, of Sampaguita Homes, Barangay Sampaguita, San Pedro town.

Supt. Jolly Dizon, town police chief, said the victim, who had worked as a correspondent of the defunct Today newspaper, was also a civilian intelligence agent of the police.

He said Pelayo usually provided them with information about the activities of personalities suspected of being involved in illegal drugs in San Pedro. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

'Salvagings' won't stop drug trade

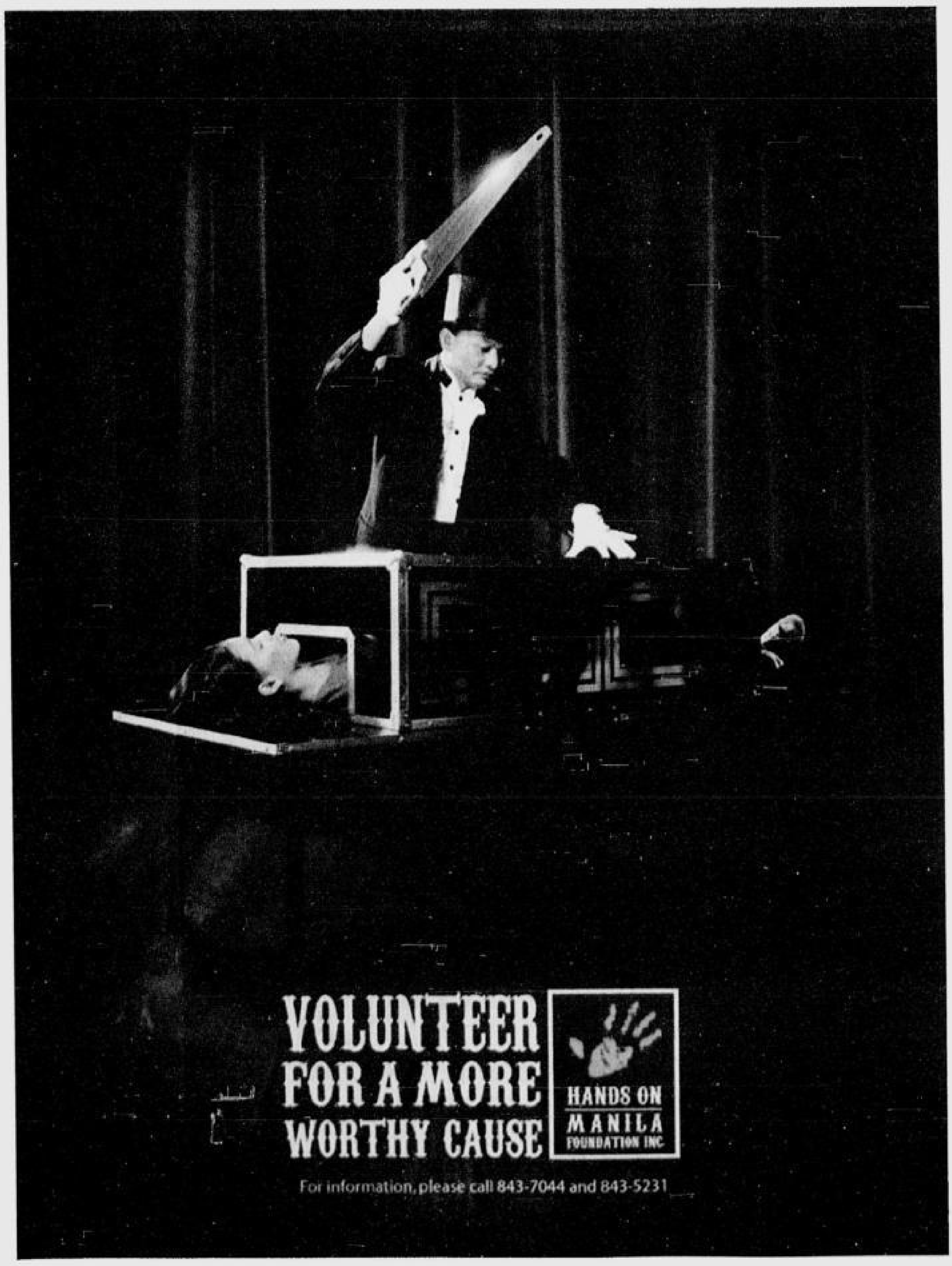
DAVAO CITY—Summary executions of suspected criminals here have failed to deter drug pushers from continuing with their trade.

On Wednesday, police arrested three suspected illegal drug pushers on separate occasions.

SPO3 Edgar Fernandez of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) said the first to fall was Glen Siega, 25, of Sandawa Avenue, who yielded 0.05 grams of suspected methamphetamine hydrochloride during a buy-bust operation.

At around 9:30 p.m., Fernandez said the PDEA again conducted a buy-bust operation in Toril District and arrested Edgardo Tagulema, 47, and Rene Boy Rosario, 31.

Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao



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GMA pardons Erap

From page A1

"I am glad that, finally, I will be of more help to our country. It's about time to think of ways to help our poor fellow Filipinos," an elated Estrada said upon learning of the Palace announcement.

In a statement, former President Corazon Aquino said she was "happy" for Estrada and his family. "I pray that as a free man ... [he] will harness the lessons he has learned from the sufferings he has endured and continue to serve our less fortunate brothers and sisters."

Reading Ms Arroyo's order, Bunye cited three reasons for the grant of a presidential pardon.

Estrada is 70 years old and thus qualifies for clemency in keeping with the Arroyo administration's policy of releasing inmates who have reached that age, he said.

The President also considered the fact that Estrada had been under detention for six and a half years and that he "has publicly committed to no longer seek elective position or office," Bunye said.

Forfeiture

But Ms Arroyo said the forfeiture of Estrada's property and money imposed by the Sandiganbayan would "remain in force and in full, including all writs and processes issued by the Sandiganbayan in pursuance hereof, except for the bank account(s) he owned before his tenure as President."

On Sept. 12, the antigraft court ordered the forfeiture to the government of Estrada's "jueteng" payoffs amounting to P545.29 million with interest, including the P200 million deposited in the name of the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation, the P189-million commission from the purchase of Belle Corp. shares, and the "Boracay Mansion" in New Manila, Quezon City.

In 1998, when Estrada began his term as President, his declared assets were worth P46.3 million.

Ms Arroyo instructed Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, whom she had assigned to initiate pardon talks with Estrada, to deliver a copy of the pardon to the ousted leader by 9 a.m. today in Tanay, Rizal, Bunye said in a press conference.

"He has to sign it to prove that he has received and accepted the pardon," Puno said.

Puno will then formally transmit the document to the Sandiganbayan. "Once [it] ... formally notes the order and the acceptance, then the order is returned to Tanay after which the President would be released," Bunye said.

"So that could take place in a span of maybe three hours," he said.

Sandiganbayan sheriff Ed Urieta will deliver the release order to Tanay for implementation, according to Renato Bocar, executive clerk of court and acting spokesperson.

1 p.m. departure

Estrada told the INQUIRER that he would be leaving his vacation house in Tanay, where he has remained under house arrest since 2004, at about 1 p.m. today.

Bunye told reporters that the decision to grant a pardon to Estrada was based on the recommendations made by acting Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera who, he said, "actively participated" in the preparation of the order itself.

"The President has considered all factors and circumstances and the President is convinced that based on the recommendation of the DOJ that this pardon is in order and is appropriate," he said, in reply to questions that the pardon was granted amid opposition by some groups.

Puno admitted that the Cabinet had been debating since Monday, shortly after Malacañang received a copy of Estrada's letter seeking "full, free and unconditional pardon" and after he dropped his motion for reconsideration of the Sandiganbayan's guilty verdict.

In the end, Puno said he prevailed after he convinced the President that a prompt action on the application for executive clemency would augur well for the country's future.

Estrada's day

For his first day as a free man today, Estrada has everything planned out: A quick meet-and-greet with supporters, a low-key dinner with family and friends, and a sleepover by the bedside of his ailing mother at the hospital.

He had explained that his decision to concede to his lawyers' advice came after he realized the futility of continuing to fight for his innocence to a court that showed no signs of overturning its guilty verdict.

"When I was ousted from Malacañang in January 2001, I went straight to my hometown, to the City Hall where all my supporters received me. That's what I would do [today]," said Estrada.

Estrada dismissed talks of running for political office again. "Being in politics for 30 years is already enough. I am already old. I will find ways to help [without entering politics]," he said.

On Jan. 20, 2001, when he left Malacañang after he was ousted by a military-backed "people power" uprising, Estrada went directly to the then San Juan municipal hall (now City Hall), an opposition bailiwick and local seat of his power.

This time around, Estrada will again journey to City Hall, where he is expected to be greeted by his son, Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito, family members, political allies and hundreds of supporters in a "simple" celebration.

Estrada, who had served as San Juan mayor for three decades, will address the crowd at 1 p.m. from a small stage, said Lheng Alejo of the city's public information office. There will be no motorcade or parade, she said.

Ailing mother

The ousted leader will proceed to the nearby San Juan Medical Center to visit his mother, 102-year-old Doña Mary Ejercito, who is suffering from pneumonia and other complications.

Estrada's wife, former Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, yesterday said the household in Polk Street, North Greenhills, was busy preparing food for her husband and well-wishers, who are expected to troop to his residence.

"He told me that he will be here after lunch," she said. She said her husband had told her early this week that he would be "home" today.

The "thanksgiving party" will start with a Mass to be attended by Estrada's Cabinet secretaries and allies in the opposition, Ejercito said.

In Cebu City, Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and the two leaders of Congress earlier asked Ms Arroyo to give Estrada "full and absolute" pardon.

"With the multitude of others of like minds, we appeal and ask the President to extend full, free and absolute pardon to former President Joseph Estrada and that he unconditionally accept this act of clemency from the President," wrote Vidal, Senate President Manuel Villar and Speaker Jose de Venecia in a letter dated Sept. 16, 2007, and aired yesterday by radio station dyLa.

The three noted that the indictment of Estrada before the Sandiganbayan and his detention without bail have diverted the attention and efforts of the country from addressing the critical problems of poverty, development, terrorism, peace and order and social tensions.

Critical problems

Villar said the pardon was a "great step toward reconciliation which emphasizes the value of humane consideration and compassionate justice."

Sen. Francis Escudero said he was happy for Estrada's newfound freedom. "I hope he can be with his mother soon while she recuperates from her ailment."

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the pardon actually "short-circuited" the legal problems of Estrada. "It's now the President's turn to explain why she had him prosecuted then pardoned. History will decide if act is justified by circumstances," he said.

"We like to thank Ms Arroyo for granting the pardon ... [A]nd that is coming from the heart," Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, the ousted leader's son, said when interviewed from Geneva, Switzerland.

But the senator maintained that he still did not recognize the Arroyo presidency.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, who was part of the prosecution panel in Estrada's impeachment trial, did not pose any more objection. "If the President pardons, nobody can question it. That's one (presidential) power you can't question," he said. *With reports from Eliza Victoria, Inquirer Research; Gil C. Cabacungan, Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Kristine L. Alave and Alcuin Papa; and Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas; Reuters*

IN THE KNOW

Korean experience

IN AUGUST 1996, THE DEATH sentence was meted out to former South Korean President Chun Doo-hwan for treason and a 22-year prison term was slapped on former President Roh Tae-woo for bribery.

Chun was convicted of masterminding a coup in December 1979 and for a brutal 1980 crackdown on prodemocracy protests.

His successor, Roh, was found guilty of abetting the coup and accepting hundreds of millions of dollars in illegal contributions.

Roh had admitted tearfully to amassing money, and was reported by The New York Times to have been "dazed and dashed by the completeness and suddenness of his humiliation."

The disgraced Chun had also acknowledged receiving bribes during his term, and apologized for what he called "shameful deeds."

The two were in prison garb and were holding hands when the sentence was handed down.

Roh and Chun were released in December 1997 after spending about two years behind bars. They were granted a special pardon by Kim Dae-jung—then the newly elected president and a former dissident whom they had once sentenced to death—to help reconcile a country torn by recent elections and to enable it to focus on repairing the economy hit by the Asian financial crisis. Kim is considered South Korea's Ninoy Aquino.

The special pardon, however, did not relieve them of hefty fines: Chun for $270 million and Roh $350 million-roughly the amounts they received in bribes from businessmen. *Inquirer Research*

'Saddest moment in history of RP justice'

From page A1

considering that we're supposed to be teaching our national politicians not to be corrupt and to exercise good governance," said Dante Jimenez, NOPE convenor and Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption founding chair.

VACC was one of the initiators of the impeachment and plunder cases against Estrada.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, a member of PlunderWatch which also filed the impeachment and plunder charges against Estrada, noted the "political and personal gains for both (Ms Arroyo) and Erap but loss to the people who wanted the convicted Erap to admit guilt, show remorse at least."

"There is no evidence of seriousness in the government drive against corruption," Ocampo said.

Another Bayan Muna lawmaker and PlunderWatch member, Teodoro Casiño, said: "The pardon granted to Erap smacks of an opportunist political maneuver rather than a magnanimous act of justice. The least (Ms Arroyo) should have demanded was an admission of guilt and some acts of remorse and restitution."

Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros said: "Ms Arroyo has undermined the rule of law."

"Let us mark this day as a day of impunity, a setback against our struggle against corruption," she said.

Militant groups appeared resigned into accepting the turn of events, grudgingly admitting that the grant of clemency was a brilliant political tactic that would benefit Ms Arroyo since, they said, it might soon remove a "major irritant" to her embattled administration.

Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said the early pardon of Estrada "was timed to blunt the negative impact of the damning testimony" in the Senate of businessman Jose de Venecia III against the President and her husband's involvement in the controversial National Broadband Network deal.

"The motives for granting the pardon is utterly self-serving for Ms Arroyo," Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes Jr. said.

Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas chair Rafael Mariano described the pardon grant as "very machiavellian."

"It is the consummation of her plan to neutralize Mr. Estrada and his supporters, so that they would be out of the equation of her current problems. She is also preparing the ground for her treatment when she is punished for her crimes. This is political accommodation at its dirtiest," Mariano said.

"It's a done deal and it's a national tragedy, a treason against public interest in the name of political survival," said Fernando Hicap of the fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas.

He added: "It was in the political objective and calendar of the President in her sinister try to divert public attention away from her regime regarding scandals of corruption hounding her regime."

Prestoline Suyat, spokesperson of the labor group Kilusang Mayo Uno, said the granting of executive clemency "is a clear sign, not of mercifulness on her part, but of weakness in her rule and it smacks of political pragmatism, a survival instinct for her dying regime."

"The message is clear: You can steal all you want and get away with it," Leah Navarro, convenor of the Black and White Movement, said. *Reports from Jerome Aning, Norman Bordadora, Fe Zamora and TJ Burgonio*

FVR warns Gloria: Erap could bring you down

From page A1

"She has barely three years left to stabilize the economy while contending with the present political instability created by divisions among the political leaders, graft and corruption, peace and order problems, political killings and human rights violations," Ramos said.

The requisites for executive clemency have not been met, Ramos said, and even Estrada has not admitted his guilt. He said granting Estrada a pardon just a month after his conviction could also send a signal to other inmates to file for the same privilege.

"President Arroyo must bide her time and should not be rushed," Ramos said.

"This proposal must be evaluated on account of its impact on other felons who may also demand the same treatment," he said, citing retired Army Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, who is charged with plunder, as an example.

Dangerous proposal

Ramos said setting Estrada free would be a "dangerous proposal" since Estrada could always rally his followers to mount protests against Ms Arroyo and she could find herself "suffering the same fate as Estrada who was forced to vacate his office in the face of mounting protests."

He said Ms Arroyo must also consider the sentiments of the family of Bubby Dacer, the publicist who was abducted and killed allegedly by Estrada's men and whose case has remained unsolved for almost seven years.

Ramos said that granting a pardon to Estrada would not be right because, in the first place, the request was not signed by Estrada himself but by his lawyer.

"The petitioner is not in a position to impose conditions. Estrada could bring down the Arroyo [administration] if he is granted a pardon. The government must consider that Estrada still has a support base," Ramos said.

Korean precedent

Ramos also said that there must be an admission of guilt similar to what two former South Korean presidents—Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo—did before seeking forgiveness from the South Korean people. *(See In The Know above.)*

The two South Korean leaders walked free out of prison in 1997 after more than two years in jail for corruption, mutiny and treason.

"A lawyer cannot atone for the guilt of his client. The people of the Philippines are to be considered also since the case was People of the Philippines versus Estrada. Estrada should make a public apology not to Arroyo who benefited when Estrada vacated his office," Ramos stressed.

Cracks in coalition

For the first time, Ramos also admitted there were cracks in the administration coalition—between Lakas-CMD, where he is the chair emeritus and Speaker Jose de Venecia is the chair, and Kampi, which was founded by President Arroyo in 1996.

On Tuesday, Ramos was photographed with Ms Arroyo and De Venecia to show that all was well between the two officials.

The two leaders have been at odds after De Venecia's son, Jose de Venecia III, said in a Senate hearing that the Chinese telecom firm ZTE was awarded the broadband contract with the help of Ms Arroyo's husband.

Ramos also referred to allegations that politicians were given P200,000-P500,000 each after a meeting with Ms Arroyo in Malacañang.

Reform yourself first

"That is unpardonable for it to happen in the premises of the Office of the President," Ramos said.

Ramos said the Philippines, where political intrigue has put off foreign investors, would continue to lag behind its neighbors in Southeast Asia because Ms Arroyo was lurching from one crisis to another.

"Six years have already gone and we find ourselves very much still in the same conditions as six years ago.

He also said he agreed with recent calls made by De Venecia for Ms Arroyo to reform her Cabinet within 100 days to win back public trust.

"I have told her pointblank, not recently but a long time ago: You reform yourself first before you can talk about reforming other people and any other institutions," Ramos said.

With a report from Reuters

Inquirer bags 8 Catholic mass media awards

From page A1

columns in its op-ed and entertainment sections.

The annual awards were handed out at the Marie Eugenie theater at Assumption College in San Lorenzo Village, Makati City, with Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo among the key speakers.

The CMMA gives its trademark rock trophies to honor the country's best values-oriented work in student communications, radio, print, television, cinema, music, the Internet and advertising.

A record 850 entries, the highest count in CMMA's history, were considered this year.

The INQUIRER won the following awards:

- Best Editorial Cartoon—"Rights of the Child" by Jess Abrera
- Best News Photograph—"Father and Child" by Edwin Bacasmas
- Best Investigative Report—"The State of Philippine Education" by Fernando del Mundo, Volt Contreras and Alcuin Papa
- Two special citations in this category were also given to a special report on the "Guimaras oil spill" by Leila Salaverria, and the story "Filipino sex prisoner thought she was in France" by Gemma Luz Corotan.
- Best News Coverage—"Oil spill off Guimaras could reach Boracay" by Iloilo correspondent Nestor P. Burgos Jr. and Leila Salaverria
- Best Opinion Column—"Pinoy Kasi" by Michael Tan. Tan forced a tie with Bum Tenorio of Philippine Star.
- Best Entertainment Column—"Viewfinder" by Nestor Torre (in a tie with Wilson Lee Flores of the Philippine Star).

The INQUIRER also had two finalists in the best special feature category: "A school for Dumagat elders in Tanay" by Edson Tandoc Jr. and "Mobile library brings world of books" by Jocelyn Uy.

In the investigative report category, another INQUIRER finalist was a series on "Special people" by Jocelyn Uy, Tarra Quismundo, Tonette Orejas and Chelo Banal-Formoso.

Other INQUIRER finalists for best news coverage include a second story by Burgos on the Guimaras oil spill and Blanche Rivera's "Japan-RP trade deal and toxic waste."

Bacasmas had another photo titled "The young and the restless" which reached the finals in the news photograph category. He was joined by fellow INQUIRER finalists Rafael Lerma, who shot "Hands of solidarity," and Arnold Almacen, who captured "The last of the pawikan."

Two more editorial cartoons by Abrera titled "Family values and sex education" and "Moral foundation," along with fellow INQUIRER artist Gilbert Daroy, who drew a piece titled "Environmental awareness," were finalists in that category.

Jonas' kin: Tampered or not, we'll take report

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER BEING GIVEN THE RUNAROUND BY the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the family of missing activist Jonas Burgos has expressed relief over the Court of Appeals order to the military Provost Marshal to produce a report on elements of his disappearance.

Whether tampered with or not, the report on the military investigation into how the license plate of a jeep impounded by the Philippine Army ended up on a vehicle used by Burgos' abductors was crucial to his family's search for him, Jose Luis "JL" Burgos, a younger brother, said yesterday.

"The report is the only way to find Jonas right now," JL said in an interview. "We will know what happened [with] the [license] plate, and who abducted Jonas. That's how crucial it is."

The appellate court on Wednesday ordered Provost Marshal General Col. Arthur Abadilla to bring the report to a Nov. 7 hearing or be cited in contempt.

The court is hearing the Burgos family's petition for a writ of habeas corpus, which includes a plea for the military to release the report.

The family has tagged the military in the abduction after police investigators traced a license plate on one of the abductors' vehicles to an impounded jeep parked at the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion camp in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

No to release

The military denied involvement and claimed the license plate had been stolen from the camp. But it refused to release the report.

The police claimed Jonas was an officer in the New People's Army and was kidnapped by his comrades for pilfering funds.

Burgos, 37, a son of the late press freedom icon Joe Burgos, was seized from a Quezon City mall by four men and a woman on April 28.

Quoting the military, JL said some 60 military personnel had been investigated and their statements, if they are in the report, could shed light on his brother's disappearance.

"Those names will be a big help. They are accompanied by affidavits. We will know if they're lying or if they're telling the truth. That's how vital the information is," he said.

"If it's doctored, we will know it. If they didn't doctor it, we will also know it."

JL said that contrary to reports, the military still refused to release the report during Wednesday's hearing at the Court of Appeals even after AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon had said in a TV interview on Tuesday that he had ordered its declassification.

Third time lie

"That was the third time they lied about releasing the report. We won't trust Esperon anymore," he said.

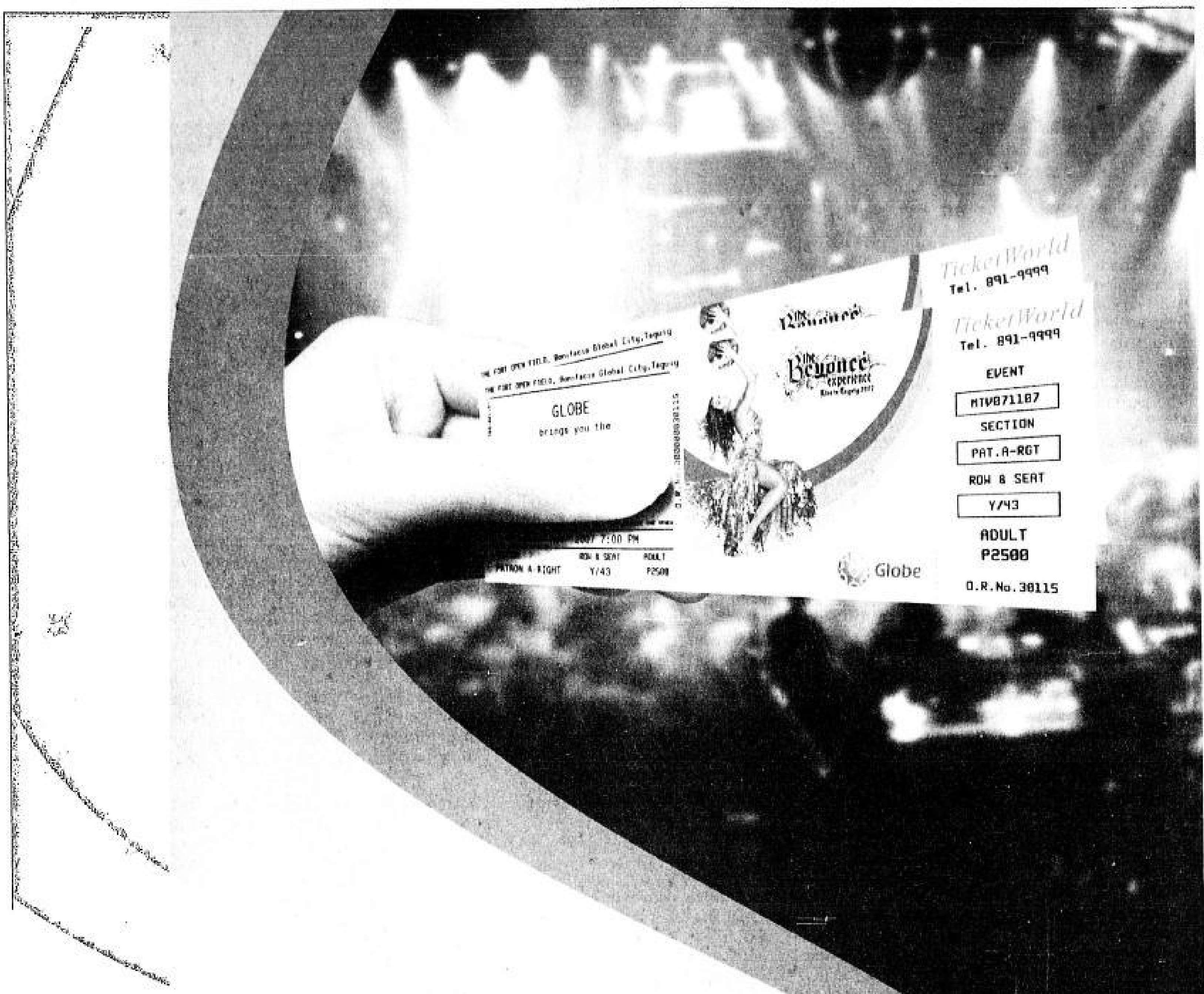
"This time, we will get the report with or without the approval of General Esperon because the court said it will cite in contempt those who fail to produce the report," Burgos said.

"It's sad that they have not released the report up to this time. To us, it's a matter of life and death, he said." His family insists Burgos was simply an agriculturist who was teaching poor farmers organic farming.

The family, however, is not rushing to file a petition for the writ of amparo before their current petition is resolved, JL said.

The writ of amparo provides remedies to persons whose rights to life, liberty and security have been threatened or violated.

"We will definitely file [the writ of amparo], but we're still discussing with our lawyers how to go about it," JL said.



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ISABEL IN TOWN
Philippine-born socialite Isabel Preysler is shown upon arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday. Preysler, former wife of Spanish pop icon Julio Iglesias, later married former Spanish finance minister Miguel Boyer. JESS YUSON

Ynares lets Metro use dump ‘indefinitely’

MMDA speeds up search for new facility

By Kristine L. Alave

RIZAL GOV. CASIMIRO YNARES III HAS agreed to let Metro Manila use its 19-hectare sanitary landfill “indefinitely” or until the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) finds alternative sites.

In a phone interview, Ynares said the agreement was reached during a meeting with MMDA officials led by Chair Bayani Fernando Wednesday evening. “We granted the extension they requested,” Ynares said. He said the grace period was “indefinite.”

Ynares said he was assured by Fernando that the MMDA would hasten the search for alternative dumps for Metro Manila’s trash.

“With the Christmas season just around the corner, it would be difficult for them to find other sites,” he said.

The MMDA and some Metro Manila mayors asked Ynares to let them use the new sanitary landfill in Rodriguez, Rizal province for at least six more months.

Ynares previously told the MMDA it could use the dump only until Oct. 25. He said the landfill was for the exclusive use of Rizal municipalities.

Metro Manila mayors, fearing a crisis, were alarmed by the mention of a deadline.

Pasig, Makati, San Juan, and Mandaluyong cities do not have their own dumps. Cities in the south, on the other hand, use landfills in Laguna and Cavite provinces.

Earlier, Ynares and Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuerpo quarreled over control of the dumps. Ynares ordered in the closure of Rodriguez’s 14-hectare landfill in September, and its replacement with the 19-hectare facility. But Cuerpo said the new landfill was illegal and had no permit from the municipal government.

Meanwhile, Laguna Lake Development Authority General Manager Edgardo Manda, who gave the landfill a 90-day temporary clearance, urged Ynares and the contractor, Solid Waste Integrated Management Specialists Inc., to “cure the deficiencies.”

Manda said the contractor should ensure that there was an underground leachate treatment system. He said an Environmental Compliance Certificate would be issued after a thorough review of the site.

SC allows toll collection on Coastal Road

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT REFUSED TO ISSUE a preliminary injunction order against toll collection at the Coastal Road, the thoroughfare linking Metro Manila and Cavite.

The high court affirmed the Court of Appeals’ lifting of the preliminary injunction order of a Makati Regional Trial Court.

The tribunal said Presidential Decree 1818 prohibited the issuance of such an order against government infrastructure projects so as not to disrupt essential projects.

The Coastal Road is part of the Manila-Cavite Toll Expressway Project. It is operated by the Malaysian firm UemaraPhilippines Corporation (UMPC) through a Toll Operation Agreement with the Toll Regulatory Board and the Public Estates Authority.

Ernesto Francisco sought to stop the toll collection, part of which would be used to compensate the UMPC for its investment. He said the amount was too high and no public hearing was held before the rate was fixed.

DID YOU KNOW

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission, which holds office in Mandaluyong City, was created on Oct. 26, 1936 by virtue of Commonwealth Act No. 83. It was established in response to the local stock market boom at the time. Operations began on Nov. 11, 1936.

SEC was abolished during the Japanese occupation but was reactivated in 1947. It aims to “strengthen the corporate and capital market infrastructure of the Philippines, and to maintain a regulatory system … that promotes the interests of investors in a free, fair and competitive business environment.”

SEC’s website, www.sec.gov.ph, allows visitors to register corporations, read advisories and investors’ alert, among others.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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Court stops DPWH from dismantling billboards

By Tina G. Santos

A MANILA COURT HAS ORDERED THE Department of Public Works and Highways to stop the dismantling of billboards and other advertising structures put up by an association of local advertisers in the city.

Judge Emma Young of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 36 issued Tuesday a temporary restraining order in response to a motion from the Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines (OAAP). The association said the DPWH violated due process.

OAAP alleged new billboard circulars signed by Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. were not consistent with the provisions of the National Building Code.

The associated questioned the circular's provisions on road setbacks and sizes of roof signs, saying there was "no such setback requirement under existing laws."

The new circular requires free-standing billboards to be at least eight meters off main roads with widths of 30 meters or more, like Edsa. A setback of six meters is required off roads with widths of 25-29 meters. Setbacks are also mandated behind and beside free-standing billboards.

Ebdane said the DPWH's "Oplan Baklas Billboard" was implemented based on existing rules and regulations under the National Building Code to assure public safety and prevent accidents from the toppling of illegal and unsafe billboards.

The DPWH and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority have been bringing down billboards in compliance with President Macapagal-Arroyo's order to remove billboards on the road right-of-way that violate the building code, or are built without proper permits, thus posing a risk to public safety.

At the height of Typhoon "Milenyo" in September last year, several giant billboards collapsed, killing a man and injuring several others. The President then ordered the DPWH to inspect all billboards and take down those violating the building code.

DPWH National Building Code Development Office Director Emmanuel Cuntapay said other Oplan Baklas Billboard operations in Metro Manila and other regions would continue.

In the National Capital Region, the DPWH had already dismantled 3,890 illegal and unsafe billboards along national roads, Cuntapay said.

Fratman's lawyer says UP on 'a fishing expedition'

By Jeannette I. Andrade

OFFICIALS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE Philippines and law enforcement agencies were accused yesterday of being on a "fishing expedition" at the expense of members of the Sigma Rho fraternity.

Bonifacio Alentajan, lawyer of graduating law student Juan Paolo Fajardo, one of the students facing administrative charges for the death of senior public administration student Cris Anthony Mendez, said UP officials, the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) were on a fishing expedition directed against his client and other members of his fraternity.

"I am not talking about the institution but the people overseeing the case," Alentajan said after Judge Jose Paneda of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 220 postponed yesterday's hearing on the petition for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction for the administrative proceedings of the student disciplinary tribunal (SDT).

Paneda suspended the hearing until all respondents had been formally informed of the pending petition.

Alentajan also bewailed what he claimed was his client's trial by publicity, saying it violated Fajardo's right to due process.

Marvie Leonen, UP vice president for legal affairs, said the petition was the second filed against the university and its officials by Sigma Rho members.

He said it was probably meant to intimidate the university to abandon the search for truth in the Mendez case.

The first petition was filed by former National College of Public Administration and Governance student council chair Ariel Paolo Ante who asked the court to have his preventive suspension lifted.

DDB°

DDB Worldwide Develops New Corporate Identity to Reflect Proprietary Co-Creativity Process and Philosophy

DDB Worldwide Communications Group Inc, the fourth largest consolidated advertising and marketing services network in the world, recently announced a new corporate identity and redesigned DDB.com (www.ddb.com) to celebrate the group's evolution from creator of traditional advertising to co-creative architect of engaging brand experiences.

As part of the new branding effort, DDB unveiled a refreshed logotype, a new icon, and enhanced corporate colors. Characterized by simple Helvetica Neue typeface, the new logo is punctuated by a yellow sphere seated to the upper right of the DDB acronym. The disc symbolizes the DDB creative circle, the world's most Creative Co-Op. At the same time, the redesigned DDB.com was introduced as a platform to "engage and exchange" through a real time dialog, debate and discussion with visitors to the site prompted by provocative questions from DDB employees and executives.

John Zeigler, President and CEO, DDB, Asia Pacific adds "As everyone knows, Asia is a complicated region with a diverse set of cultures - we have 22 offices in 14 countries offering a range of communications services. Despite the cultural differences in the region, and in fact around the world, DDB is one brand - one voice -- the new corporate identity represents the way DDB has evolved."

Gil Chua, President and CEO of DDB in the Philippines, sees the brand refresh as an affirmation of DDB's philosophy and practices. "The new DDB brand identity complements our main thrusts of 360-degree service. With DDB's creative strength, we are proud with the holistic approach to communication as it gives DDB the vital edge to outperform expectations from our clients."

DDB Worldwide Communications Group Inc (www.ddb.com) with more than 200 offices in over 90 countries is the fourth largest consolidated advertising and marketing services global network and the most awarded agency network in the world according to Creativity magazine 2006.

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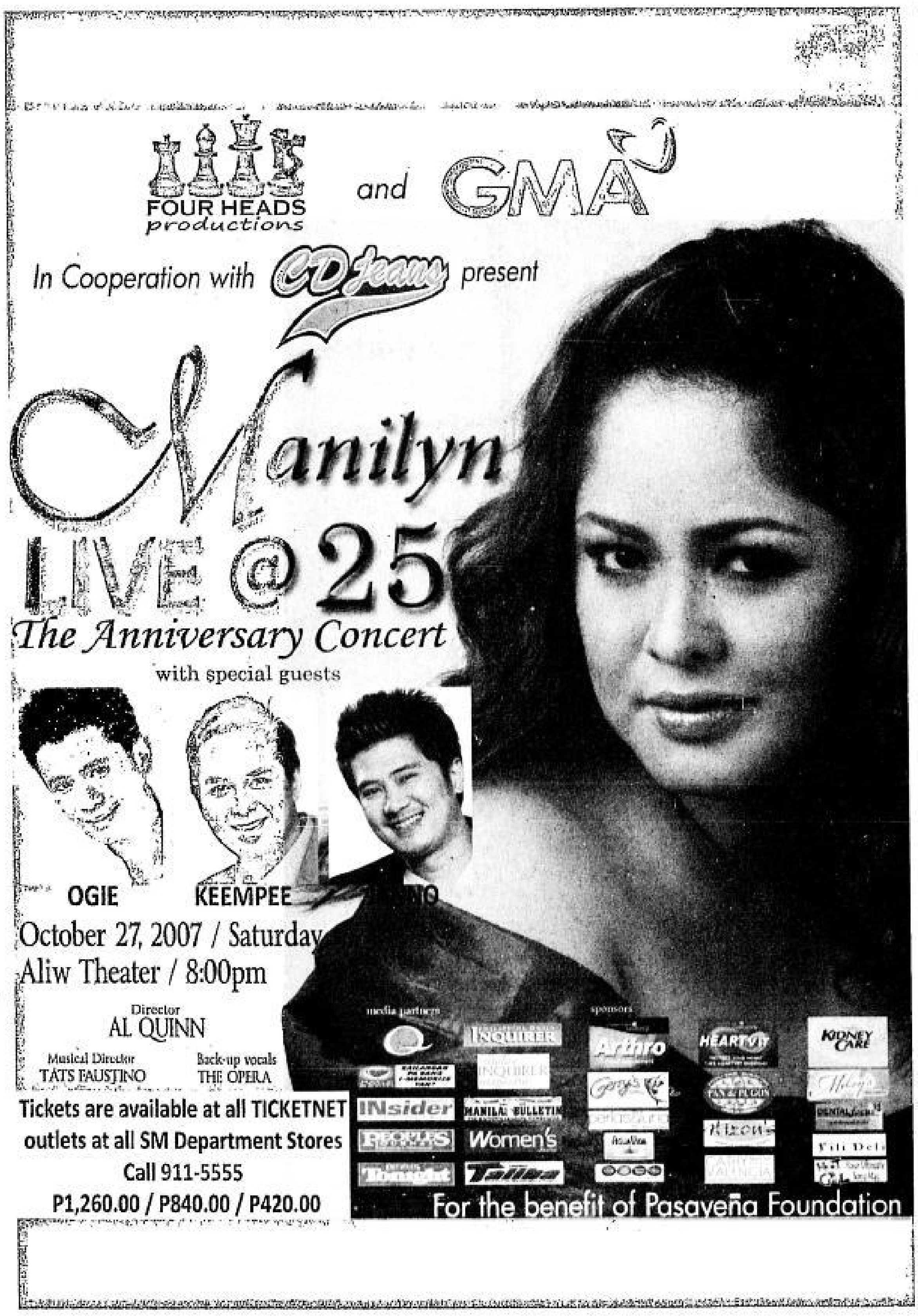

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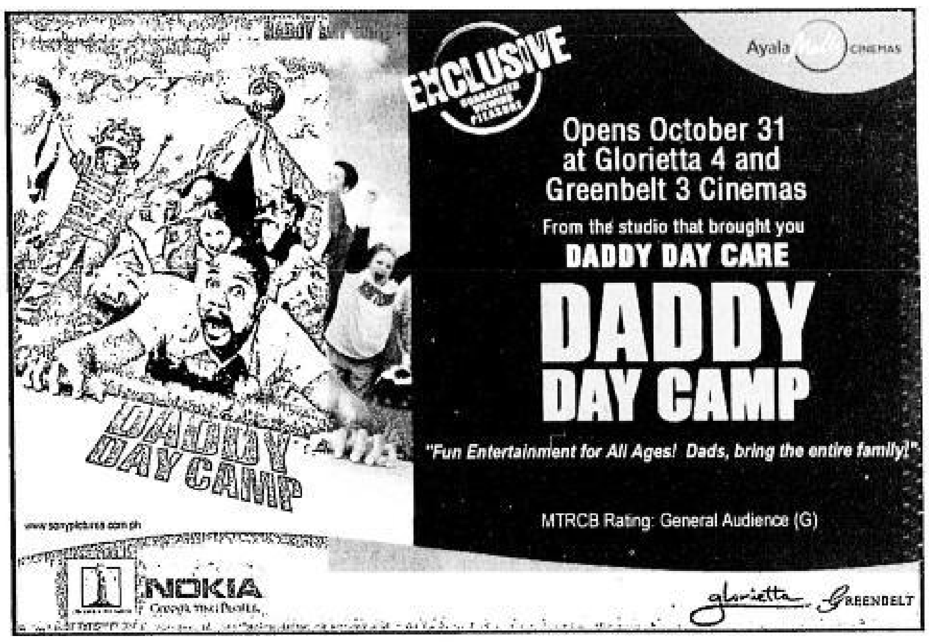

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3:00	Dead Silence	John Carpenter's The Thing	Alfred Hitchcock: Rear Window	Wes Craven's Vampire in Brooklyn
5:30	Tremors 4	John Carpenter's Village of the Dammed	Alfred Hitchcock: The Birds	Wes Craven's The Serpent & The Rainbow
8:00	Dead Silence	John Carpenter's The Thing	Alfred Hitchcock: Rear Window	Wes Craven's Vampire in Brooklyn
10:30	Tremors 4	John Carpenter's Village of the Dammed	Alfred Hitchcock: The Birds	Wes Craven's The Serpent & The Rainbow

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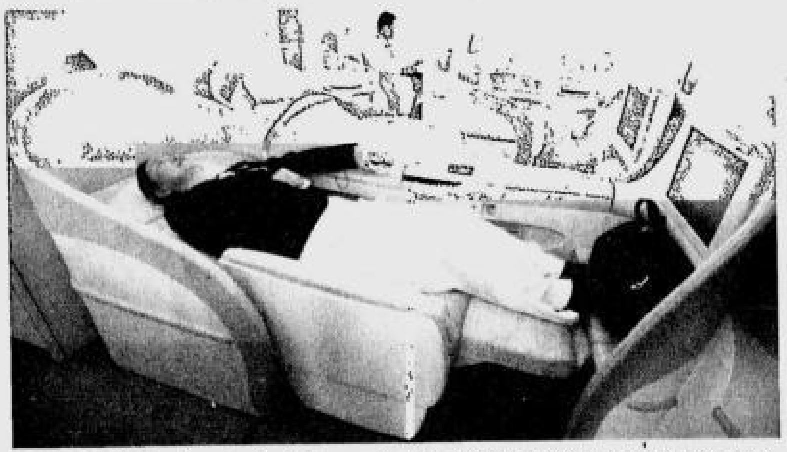


A WOMAN checks out a first class seat of the Airbus A380 superjumbo during a media tour in Shanghai on Oct. 25. REUTERS

World's biggest jumbo jet lands in Sydney, ending first flight

SYDNEY—THE WORLD'S BIGGEST jumbo jet landed safely in Sydney on Thursday, ending its first commercial flight from Singapore.

The Singapore Airlines' Airbus A380 superjumbo emerged from low-lying cloud to touch down on time on a damp Sydney afternoon, completing its flight from Singapore's Changi Airport.

The aircraft will return to Singapore on Friday.

Passengers paid between $560 and $100,380 to be on the inaugural flight, after bidding for the tickets as part of a charity auction to drum up publicity.

The new aircraft—which boasts two passenger decks and, in Singapore Airlines' version, first-class suites with proper beds—suffered two years of delays caused by wiring glitches, which pushed the planemaker into a loss and led to 10,000 lost jobs.

Singapore Airlines is to take delivery of another five A380s in 2008. *Reuters*

Pentagon seeks funding for bunker-busting bomb

WASHINGTON—CITING AN "URGENT operational need," the Pentagon is seeking funds to modify B-2 stealth bombers to deliver an experimental 30,000 pound (13.6 ton), satellite-guided bunker busting bomb, officials said Wednesday.

The likely purpose of the new weapon is to strike Iran's underground nuclear facilities, experts said.

"It raises a red flag," said Rep. Jim Moran, a Democrat from Virginia who called for hearings on the request. "My immediate assumption is that it is a target in Iran, rather than Iraq or Afghanistan."

The Air Force has asked Congress for nearly $88 million to complete development of the so-called Massive Ordnance Penetrator and modify B-2 bombers so that they can deliver it, an Air Force spokesperson said.

"This program is an effort to satisfy an urgent operational need for the Massive Ordnance Penetrator, a 30,000 pound (13,608 kg) GPS guided penetrator weapon on B-2 for hard and deeply buried" targets, the Air Force's request budget said.

The item was buried in a $42.3 billion request for "war on terror" funding submitted by the administration last week, raising suspicions about the rush to field what would be the largest satellite guided conventional bomb in the US arsenal.

"It's a capability that has some relation to the capabilities in the Centcom AOR," a senior defense official said, referring to the US Central Command's area of responsibility.

"You have buried targets, particularly in Afghanistan, that you are concerned about," the official told reporters last week, referring to cave systems that insurgents have used in Afghanistan.

But some experts believe the bomb, also known as "Big Blue," was developed with Iran's deeply buried nuclear facilities in mind.

"I do know they got interested in this around the time the Iranians began backfilling the large uranium enrichment facility at Natanz," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.Org, which follows military issues.

The bomb is currently under development by Boeing under a "technology demonstrator" contract with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency that concludes this fiscal year.

A first test was conducted in March at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico using a "statically emplaced conventional weapon within a DTRA tunnel," according to the agency.

Tests from a B-52 bomber are planned for next month and in July 2008, the agency said in a fact sheet on the bomb.

Pike described the bomb as "a big dart. It's basically just a long skinny pointy chunk of steel."

Its massive weight would drive the weapon through rock and reinforced concrete, he said. Fuzes could be used to detonate the explosives as it breaks through a ceiling into a void.

The Defense Threat Reduction Agency said the MOP is approximately 6.25 meters long, with a 80 centimeter diameter and a total weight of slightly less than 30,000 pounds.

"The weapon will carry over 5,300 pounds (2,404 kg) of explosive material and will deliver more than 10 times the explosive power of its predecessor, the BLU-109," it said.

The biggest US conventional bomb is the 21,000 pound (9.5 ton) Massive Ordnance Air Blast Bomb, also known as the Mother of All Bombs. AFP

Bill to grant legal status for immigrant students fails test vote in US Senate

WASHINGTON—A BILL TO GRANT legal status to illegal immigrants who are high school graduates was defeated Wednesday in a test vote in the Senate, significantly dimming the prospects for any major immigration legislation this year.

By a vote of 52-44, the bill failed to garner the 60 votes needed to proceed to a debate on the Senate floor. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Richard J. Durbin of Illinois, the second-ranking Senate Democrat, would have given provisional legal status to illegal immigrant students who completed high school if they either attended college or served in the military for two years.

Lawmakers said Durbin's bill was a litmus test for the immigration issue because it was the most politically palatable piece of the broad immigration legislation backed by President George W. Bush that failed last summer in the Senate.

Durbin's measure, called the Dream Act by its supporters, was tailored to benefit young, successful students whose immigration status was the result of decisions by their parents to come to the United States illegally, in many cases when the children were small.

Republican sponsors of the bill included Senators Chuck Hagel of Nebraska and Richard G. Lugar of Indiana.

The vote showed that Republican opposition remained resolute to any effort to give legal status to illegal immigrants. It also eroded the support of some Democrats for other immigration measures under discussion. Those include a bill known as AgJobs that would give legal status to illegal immigrant farmworkers and overhaul a guest worker program for agriculture. Employers are also asking Congress to expand and streamline visa programs to bring in highly skilled legal immigrant workers.

"They'll all be hard, every one of them," Durbin said of the other immigration initiatives after the vote on his bill. NYT

Billion dollars in damage as California fires continue

LOS ANGELES—FIRES RAGING across California have caused more than one billion dollars in property damage and left three people dead, officials said Wednesday, as a lull in winds allowed firefighters to make their first significant progress in combating the flames.

Around 1,700 buildings have been destroyed in the 18 fires that have erupted since Sunday, forcing an estimated 500,000 people to flee their homes and scorching 172,000 hectares of tinder-dry countryside stretching from celebrity-studded Malibu to beyond the Mexican border.

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said three people had died and 40 people had been injured in the fires, the worst to hit California since devastating 2003 blazes which claimed 22 lives.

The fast-spreading infernos have been fueled by powerful desert winds gusting across the region, making conditions hazardous for thousands of exhausted firefighters who have tackled the flames relentlessly.

So far 1,664 structures, including 1,436 homes, have been destroyed while a further 25,000 buildings remained threatened, Schwarzenegger added.

A respite from the winds forecast to continue through the remainder of the week enabled firefighters on Wednesday to make great strides in containing three of the five biggest blazes.

"The wind stopped blowing and that made our lives a lot easier," said a Los Angeles County Fire Department official tackling the Buckweed fire, which charred 15,000 hectares before being 100 percent contained late Wednesday.

But the two biggest California fires, covering around 108,000 hectares of San Diego County, were both only 10 percent contained.

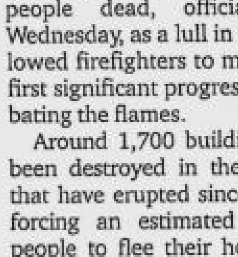
President George W. Bush formally declared the region a disaster zone, paving the way for federal funds to boost the relief effort. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Turkish warplanes bomb Kurd rebels

ANKARA—Turkish warplanes bombed Kurdish rebel targets along the Iraqi border on Wednesday as the country's National Security Council urged economic sanctions against Iraqi Kurds accused of backing the insurgents. Fighter jets bombed and destroyed several Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) mountain positions in provinces bordering Iraq and Iran, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported. Helicopter gunships also joined the raids that followed the killing of 12 soldiers in a PKK ambush near the Iraqi border on Sunday. *AFP*

First lady is favorite to win Argentina election



DE KIRCHNER AP

FIRST LADY Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner is heavily favored to win Argentina's election on Sunday, setting the stage for a rare handover of power between democratically elected spouses. Fernandez is the clear front-runner, helped by the popularity of her husband President Nestor Kirchner, who has overseen a dramatic economic recovery in a nation that had become one of Latin America's most unstable economies. Polls show Fernandez holds more than a 20-point lead over her closest rival, propelled by China-style annual growth rates higher than 8 percent since her husband took office four years ago and led the country out of a deep crisis. *Reuters*

Russian 'chessboard killer' convicted of 48 slays

MOSCOW—A Russian supermarket worker, dubbed "the chessboard murderer," was convicted on Wednesday of killing 48 people after he confessed in court that the first time he took a life was like falling in love. Given his nickname by Russian media because he had hoped to put a coin on every square of a 64-square chessboard for each of his victims, Alexander Pichushkin also admitted to killing 11 more people not included in the court case. The verdict, handed down by a jury in a Moscow courtroom, makes 33-year-old Pichushkin Russia's deadliest serial killer since Andrei Chikatilo, known as the "Rostov Ripper." He was convicted in 1992 of killing more than 50 people and executed. *Reuters*

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We find ways

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Fall of Burma junta seen bringing chaos

By Denis D. Gray

BANGKOK, THAILAND—UNDER THE MOST OPTIMISTIC scenario, a "people power" uprising topples the iron-fisted generals who have ruled Burma (Myanmar) for a half century. Democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi is freed from years of house arrest and announces general elections.

The world cheers.

But were such events to unfold—and many say the junta is sure to tumble one day—Burma's long anguish might simply give way to chaos.

After a collective sigh of relief from a long-suffering population, some experts foresee a "nightmare scenario": resurgent ethnic insurgencies, gutted institutions, clashes among leaders with no experience in democracy and continuing aftershocks from the junta's ruinous economic policies in one of the world's poorest nations.

"The transition to civilian rule is bound to be extremely difficult, given the fact that the country has not had a truly civilian government since 1962," says Bertil Lintner, one of several Burma experts who believe elements of the military would have to be retained to guide the country through such turbulent times.

Calls for democracy

Following the junta's crackdown on protesters, many in the international community—including the United States—have renewed calls for democracy in Burma, also known as Myanmar.

However, the country's giant neighbor and chief backer, China, has stressed stability and a gradual transition over sudden regime change, a view shared by some of Burma's Southeast Asian neighbors.

Abruptly jettisoning the military, it is feared, would have dire consequences. There are too few qualified civilians left to run the country, and disbanding the Army might imperil security, much as it did after Iraq's forces were sent home after the fall of Saddam Hussein.

A YOUNG monk looks out from his school room at a monastery outside Rangoon. AP

"You've had, over the past 40 years, the Army slowly become really not just a dominant state institution but practically the only state institution, even at the local level," says Thant Myint-U, author of a recent book on his homeland, "The River of Lost Footsteps."

Buddhist monks

Buddhist monks, numbering some half a million, took the leading role in recent protests and remain a highly revered and potentially effective force for change, but cannot by their own precepts step in to govern the country.

Not only does the 400,000-strong Army wield the guns—turning them on a rebellious citizenry as it did in recent weeks—but it has taken over all major business enterprises and all but the routine tasks of government.

A state-within-a-state as well as a privileged class, the military provides its own with relatively good schools, health facilities, housing and jobs, while the public copes with a shattered infrastructure on less than $1 a day.

"Rebuilding these structures at the same time as easing the Army out of its overall government role is an almost unprecedented task. It's hard for me to think of another situation in which that has happened peacefully," said Thant Myint-U, a former United Nations official.

Democracy may not find fertile soil in Burma, which has passed through a thousand years of feudalism, 124 years of British colonial rule and 45 years of military dictatorship, with a tumultuous, 14-year experiment in democracy sandwiched in between.

The last generation that participated in free elections is rapidly passing. Repeated crackdowns have decimated the ranks of younger prodemocracy activists, and many others are pursuing new lives abroad.

Suu Kyi untested

Although hugely popular inside Burma and internationally, the 62-year-old Suu Kyi remains untested as a political leader. Before emerging to lead an antigovernment uprising in 1988, she had spent most of her life abroad, despite being the daughter of Burma's martyred founding father, Gen. Aung San. The Nobel Peace Prize laureate has spent 12 of the last 18 years under house arrest.

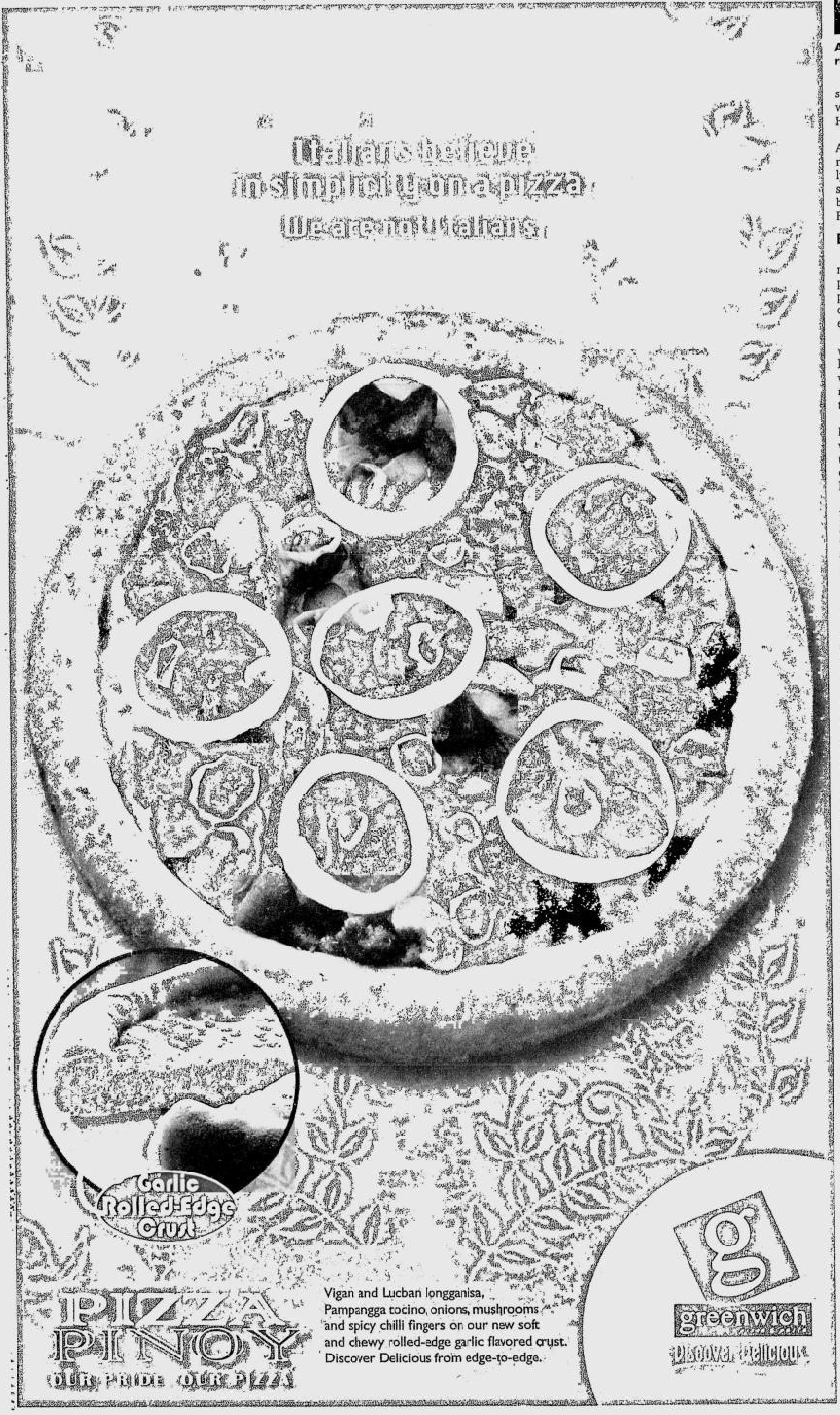
"She's probably the only person who could counsel patience and moderation and be able to bring a large part of the population with her," said Thant Myint-U. "This will be important for the transition, but beyond that it's impossible to know how well she would be able to cope with the challenges of day-to-day government."

Many among the educated in Burma fear these are bound to be legion—from the confrontational politics that marred the country's flirtation with democracy to a dearth of human capital in the wake of what critics consider one of the military's worst offenses: a "war on education."

Universities, regarded as hotbeds of dissent, were shut down for nearly seven out of the 12 years following the 1988 uprising. In many schools, textbooks, if they exist at all, must be shared, library shelves are all but empty and science is taught without laboratories by teachers on starvation wages.

"Maybe that is what the military really wanted, the elimination of an educated population. Whether it was or not, that is what has occurred," said Josef Silverstein, a retired academic from Rutgers University who has studied Burma for more than half a century.

And it is uncertain whether members of the large educated Burmese exile community would return to the country should the junta fall—or how well they could integrate and contribute, says Thant Myint-U, an exile himself who has lived abroad since leaving the country as a young boy. *AP*



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RP 5 bounces back; Toyota wins

ALEX Crisano of the Harbour-RP team, gets harassed by Mail and More's RJ Masbang in yesterday's game at the Arena in San Juan. Crisano, the former Ginebra player, rose to the occasion by powering the SEAG-bound Nationals to a morale-boosting win. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By Marc Anthony Reyes

TEAM HARBOUR-PHILIPPINES BLEW HOT AND COLD BEFORE slipping past Mail and More, 94-84, yesterday for its first win as a guest team in the 2008 PBL V-Go Extreme Energy Drink Cup at The Arena in San Juan.

GAMES TOMORROW
(*The Arena*)
2 p.m.—Harbour-RP Team vs Bacchus
4 p.m.—San Mig Coffee vs Hapee Toothpaste

Alex Crisano, the former Barangay Ginebra center trying to re-ignite his career with a stint in the Southeast Asian Games-bound squad, provided leadership and the scoring sock for the Nationals with 21 points, aside from grabbing 10 rebounds.

"I'm still far from contented," RP head coach Junel Baculi said. "In the dugout, I told them that we are not All-Stars, we are a national team. If you are star players in your mother teams, you are just role players in this team."

Meanwhile, Toyota Balintawak jumped to the solo lead after repulsing newcomer Pharex, 91-85, for its second straight win.

The Medics, who slumped to 0-2, gave the Road Kings a major scare in the third quarter when they forged ahead, 45-44.

"It's hard playing against a team that is not under pressure," said Toyota coach Ariel Vanguardia, who relied on the individual talents of his players like RJ Jazul and Chito Jaime to pull off the win. "It's good for their players and good for their franchise."

The Nationals, who bowed to defending champion Harbour Centre in their debut, struggled most of the first half before cutting loose with a 16-2 assault that broke the game wide open, 60-43, in the third quarter.

The Khiel Misa-led Comets came within eight points, 57-65, before Jason Castro and Patrick Cabahug moved the Nationals in front to stay, 77-62.

The 31-year-old Fil-Italian Crisano, who at 6-foot-7 is expected to be a tower of power for the Nationals, poured 10 points in the third quarter as they zoomed to a 19-point lead, 65-46.

The scores:

First Game

RP TEAM 94—Crisano 21, Castro 17, Bautista 10, Belga 10, Cabahug 8, Chan 7, Fernandez 5, Alonzo 4, Dela Cuesta 4, Salangsang 3, Cruz 3, Tan 2.

MAIL & MORE 84—Misa 18, David 11, Gregorio 10, Javier 10, Bravo 10, Canlas 8, Baracael 5, Bonus 4, Bauzon 3, Ballesteros 3, Arellano 2, Masbang 0, Mendoza 0, White 0.

Quarters: 13-11, 35-36, 65-57, 94-84

Second Game

TOYOTA BALINTAWAK 91—Jaime 16, Aldave 13, Sta. Maria 12, Villanueva 11, Alcaraz 11, Jazul 9, Sena 9, Dedicatoria 6, Casio 3, Guerrero 3, Hayes 1, Cole 0, Faundo 0.

PHAREX 85—Co 17, Matias 14, Oreta 12, Espiritu 11, Allera 10, Yambao 7, Alfad 7, Burtscher 4, De Guzman 2, Soriano 1, Gerila 0.

Quarters: 23-17, 39-37, 64-54, 91-85

Pagunsan just 1 off with a 66

JAKARTA—JUVIC PAGUNSAN GUNNED down eight birdies in his strongest start in the Asian Tour this season, finishing with a six-under-par 66 that put him just a stroke off the lead in the $350,000 Pertamina Indonesia President Invitational Thursday.

The 29-year-old from Bacolod, the Asian Tour's 2006 Rookie of the Year, produced nines of 33-33 at the Damai Indah Golf-BSD course and could have easily forged ahead if not for two bogeys on the 11th and 17th holes.

Pagunsan trailed Thai stalwart Prom Meesawat and South Korean rookie Hur In-hoi, who shot matching 65s, while holding third place in a tie with India's Harmeet Kahloon.

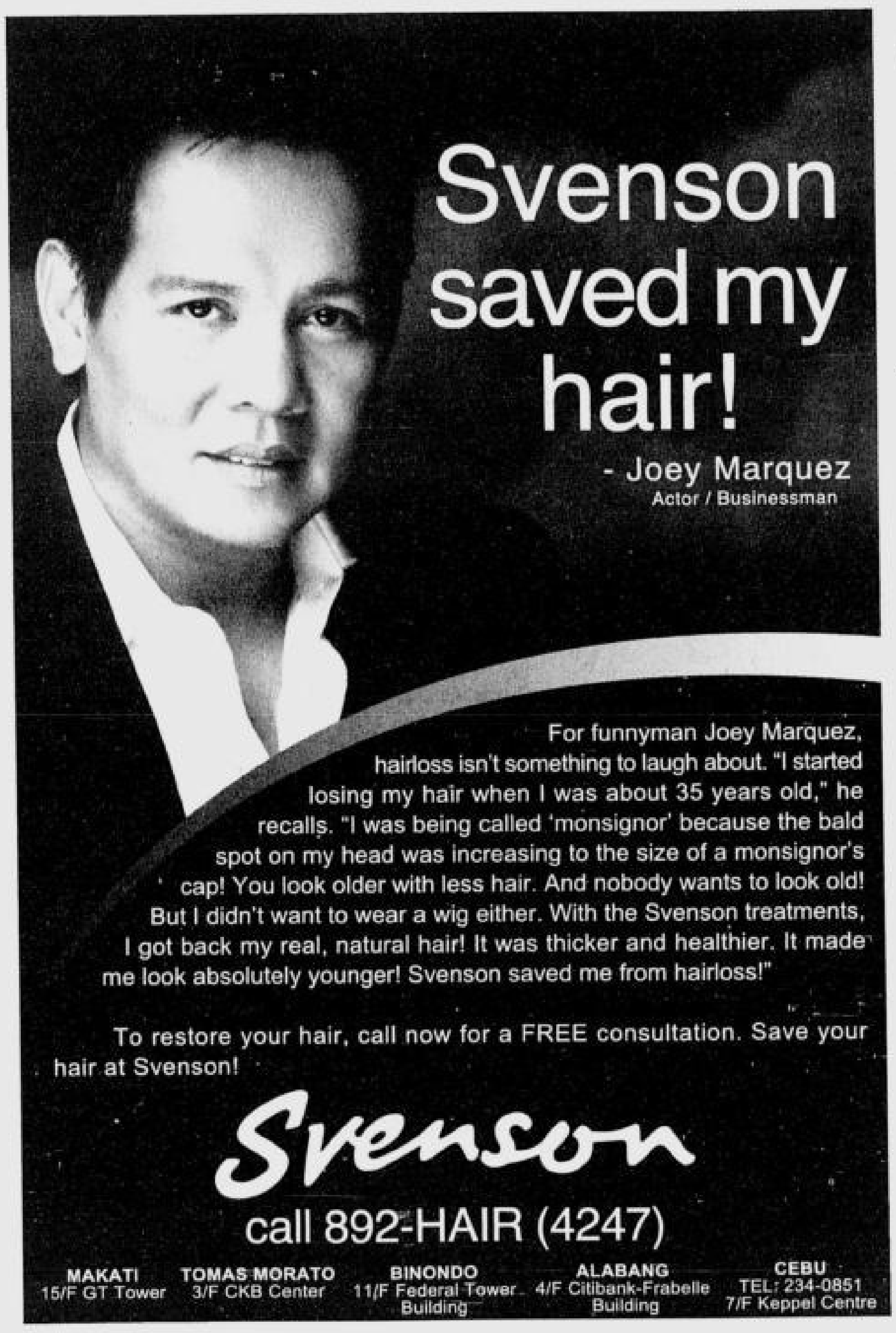
Ryder Cup star Lee Westwood of England was in fifth spot after a 67 along with Korea's Mo Joong-kyung.

Pagunsan birdied three holes from the sixth and then matched his outward card of 33 with a five-birdie, two-bogey, two-par stint on the back nine.

It was a big start for Pagunsan, who is languishing at 80th place in the Asian Tour Order of Merit. In contrast, he made $291,847 last year and wound up seventh overall in the OOM race.

Jerome Delariarte was the only Filipino to break par with a 71 while Gerald Rosales had a 72. Marlon Dizon carded a 74, Tony Lascuña shot a 75 while Mars Pucay was three over after six holes.

Prom, competing in his 12th event on the Tour, was glad to be back in the fray after having struggled with his putting in the past two weeks. *Asian Tour News*



Svenson saved my hair!
- Joey Marquez
Actor / Businessman

For funnyman Joey Marquez, hairloss isn't something to laugh about. "I started losing my hair when I was about 35 years old," he recalls. "I was being called 'monsignor' because the bald spot on my head was increasing to the size of a monsignor's cap! You look older with less hair. And nobody wants to look old! But I didn't want to wear a wig either. With the Svenson treatments, I got back my real, natural hair! It was thicker and healthier. It made me look absolutely younger! Svenson saved me from hairloss!"

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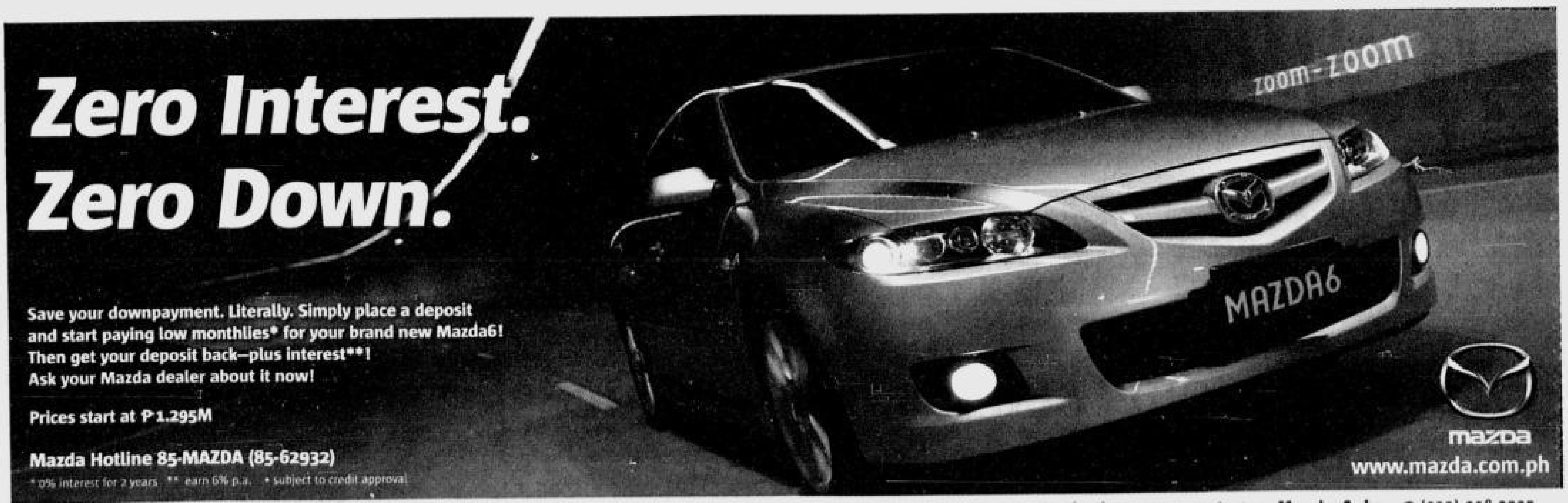

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Magnolia, Purefoods dispute solo lead

STANDINGS	W	L
Magnolia	2	0
Purefoods	2	0
Talk 'N Text	2	1
Coca-Cola	1	0
Air21	1	1
Red Bull	1	1
Ginebra	1	1
Welcoat	0	2
Sta. Lucia	0	2
Alaska	0	2

GAMES TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:35 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Alaska
7:20 p.m.—Purefoods vs Magnolia

MAGNOLIA HAS SO FAR GAINED RESULTS befitting its powerhouse tag.

The only thing that has not gone according to the form charts is the way the Beverage Masters fashioned out their first two wins.

Magnolia slugs it out with Purefoods for the solo lead in the season-opening Smart-PBA Philippine Cup today with the Tender Juicy Giants fresh from showing the form of a *greater* powerhouse.

Purefoods recently tore a souped-up Talk 'N Text side, 112-96, in what could go down as the first real upset in the tournament. And it was not because the Giants won, but in the manner in which they fashioned it out.

James Yap is playing with so much consistency and fire despite the changes in the rules which have allowed for more physical play.

Last year's MVP averaged 26.5 points in the first two victories of Purefoods, the winner of this tournament in 2005.

And Yap will be Magnolia's main headache in their 7:20 p.m. game at the Araneta Coliseum.

Kerby Raymundo and Marc Pingris are also going great guns with Roger Yap helping to provide the Giants' defensive muscle.

Well-rested Coca-Cola shoots for a second straight win earlier when it clashes with Alaska at 4:35.

The Tigers hope to ride the momentum of an 85-76 victory over Welcoat against the Aces, who have drawn an average of 34 points from reigning MVP Willie Miller but have failed to break through.

Magnolia beat Sta. Lucia, 101-96, last Oct. 21.

Danny Seigle and Dondon Hontiveros will continue to be the main offensive weapons for the Beverage Masters. *Musong R. Castillo*

Marquez blasts Pacman

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ HAS thrown another jab at Manny Pacquiao.

The WBC super featherweight champion, in a report on fightnews.com, said he waited "for an explosion that never came" from Pacquiao in the Filipino's fight against Marco Antonio Barrera.

"They missed that explosion that everybody was expecting (from Pacquiao)," Marquez was quoted as saying in the report.

He did say that Pacquiao-Barrera II was a great fight, though.

"I was waiting for that from Pacquiao's end. It didn't happen."

Pacquiao scored a unanimous decision over Barrera three weeks ago, and not being able to knock out the Mexican seemed to be the basis for Marquez's flak.

The report also said that Marquez does not have his sights on Pacquiao yet, but on Rocky Juarez against whom he will stake his belt against on Nov. 3 in Arizona.

"The most important thing I am concentrating (on) is Nov. 3; I need to win over Rocky Juarez," Marquez said. "Then the negotiations (for a fight with Pacquiao). But for me all that matters is Nov. 3." *Musong R. Castillo*

Suarez bows to Mongolian

Payla, 2 other RP pugs fight today

By Dennis U. Eroa, *Inquirer Libre*

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS—FEATHERWEIGHT Charly Suarez bowed to Mongolian Enkhzorig Zorigtbaatar, 10-13, Wednesday as the Philippines remained winless in the International Amateur Boxing Association World Championships at the University of Illinois-Chicago Pavilion here.

Suarez's setback reduced the seven-man RP-PLDT-Smart boxing team to just four bidders who will try to earn slots to the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Asian Games gold medalist and flyweight Violito Payla starts his campaign against Welshman Andrew Selby on Thursday morning (Friday in Manila) while lightweight Genebert Basadre and welter Wilfredo Lopez take on separate foes in the evening sessions.

Basadre, the Asiad bronze medalist, battles Bulgarian pride Ognyan Kolev, while Lopez tackles Velibor Vidic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Two-time Olympian Harry Tañamor drew a bye in the light-flyweight class and will get going against another Welshman, Nasir Mohammed, on Oct. 28.

Suarez of Panabo City, Davao del Norte, forced a 10-10 deadlock on the lanky and taller Mongolian, with just 40 seconds remaining in the fourth and final round. But Zorigtbaatar kept his composure and stunned Suarez with a right cross and a right straight to the body to emerge triumphant.

"Charly fought well despite being a first-timer in the worlds, but the Mongolian fought excellently," said national head coach Pat Gaspi.

The Philippines started its campaign in the biggest gathering of amateur boxers in history on a sorry note Tuesday as bantamweight Joan Tipon and light-welterweight Delfin Boholst lost badly against their respective foes.

"I gave it all but my opponent was very slippery," said a teary-eyed Suarez, who is three inches shorter than the 5-foot-9 Zorigtbaatar.

"There's nothing to be ashamed of. Charly gave it his best shot," said Philippine Sports Commission chair William Ramirez, who, for the second straight day, led a handful of Filipino fans—including members of the Fil-American Chicago Police Association—in cheering for the nationals.

Medal tally	G	S	B
Cavite	12	9	9
Laguna	8	8	4
Cam Sur	1	4	6
Naga City	0	0	2
Masbate	0	0	0
Cam Norte	0	0	0

LAGUNA'S Mark Jake Reyes (left) sinks the field, including Cavite's Milbert Caranto (right), in the 3000 meter steeplechase. ***Story below.*** RAFFY LERMA

Second gold for Reyes; Cavite shows way

By June Navarro

NAGA CITY—THERE'S JUST NO SLOWING down Mark Jake Reyes.

The 17-year-old long-distance runner from San Pablo City ruled the 3,000-meter steeplechase yesterday even as Cavite surged to the overall lead with a slew of victories in athletics in the Bicol-Southern Tagalog qualifying games of the Philippine Olympic Festival.

Reyes, who won the 5,000m Wednesday, sprinted past Melbert Caranto of Cavite in the final 200 meters to join the elite cast of double-gold medalists at the Metro Naga Sports Complex here.

"He knew I could outsprint him (Caranto), so he kept on blocking my path early on," said Reyes in Filipino after clocking 10 minutes and 26.94 seconds. "He's a cheat."

The University of the East education freshman broke free from Caranto after the last water jump. The Cavite runner settled for the silver in 10:35.91.

Laguna's Salvador Garin (10:58.70) copped the bronze.

Christopher Danafe's 23.1-second clocking in the 200m dash was the only other Laguna victory for the day even as Cavite registered seven wins behind double-gold medalists Wilma de Lara, Vivian Ayat and Mark David Madera.

Madera, 18, snared the gold in the 400m hurdles in 56.6 seconds. The graduating high school student at the Sisters of Mary School in Silang topped the 110m hurdles the other day.

Ayat, who topped the girls' 400m dash, struck again in the 400m hurdles in 1:08.9 while De Lara ruled the women's 200m with a clocking of 26.7 seconds to complete a sprint double.

Counting the victories of Janice Marquez, Aireen Rodriguez, Ernie Sabiduria and Sharon Borvanga, Cavite boosted its medal haul to 12 golds, nine silvers and nine bronzes.

Laguna dropped to second on 8-4-4.

Marquez topped the girls' 10,000m in 44:06.57, Rodriguez won with a heave of 8.52 meters in girls' shot put, Sabiduria registered 47.24 meters for the gold in the javelin and Borvanga leapt to a winning distance of 10.76 meters in the triple jump.

FEU Tamaraws zero in on Unigames crown

By Cedelf P. Tupas, *Inquirer Visayas*

BACOLOD CITY—A DELUGE of victories in men's athletics, chess and taekwondo shored up Far Eastern University's bid for overall honors in the 12th Philippine University Games here.

The Tamaraws collected four golds to snare the men's taekwondo crown with Jhundred Allas (fly), Romelle Roa (bantam), Rene Ng (welter), Michael Realista (middle/heavy) ruling their respective divisions Wednesday at the Riverside College Gym.

John B. Lacson Colleges Foundation-Bacolod, spearheaded by finweight Pauline Reyes and featherweight Rubilyn Mapa, also reigned supreme in four divisions to keep the women's taekwondo crown.

Powered by Board 1 champion Roderick Nava, FEU notched 13 points for the men's chess crown yesterday, while University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos posted 11 markers to edge De La Salle University and retain the women's title.

FEU hammered out its fourth straight blowout win—a 98-62 drubbing of University of Iloilo—to claim basketball's first quarterfinal berth in Group D.

The Tamaraws are also poised to keep their men's athletics crown by cornering nine golds—four in record-breaking fashion at the USLS oval.

Leading FEU was double-gold winner Nelbert Ducusin, who topped the 800 meters and 3,000m. Also carting away gold medals were Romnick Hermida, who posted a new meet record in the 100m with a 10.64 clocking, Paulo Joyce Rima (long jump), Romulo Mostales (400m), Orlando Soriano (110m hurdles) and the 4x200 and 4x100 relay squads.

LA SALLE'S Alexi Laconico churns her way to the gold in the 400-meter IM. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO / ANDY ALVAREZ

Luville Dato-on of University of Sto. Tomas took the women's sprint crown with a time of 12.51 seconds for her second gold after her long jump victory.

Bernadita Mag-aso also set a new mark of 2:27.04 in the 800m as UST paced the women with six golds.

Almost lost in the din of the Tamaraws' brilliance were San Beda and La Salle's dominance in the swimming events at the USLS 25-meter pool.

Lea Coleen Langit posted golden finishes in the 200m back, 200m free and 400m free as DLSU seized seven of the eight gold medals at stake Wednesday.

DLSU's other gold medalists were Tessa Alcantara in the 100m breast, Alexi Laconico in the 400m IM and Janina Sedilla in the 200m IM.

San Beda clinched six of eight golds in the men's division with Miguel Diaz, gold medalist in the 200m back, 200m IM, and 4x100 medley, anchoring its bid.

Only DLSU standout Ernest Lorenzo Dee survived San Beda's assault, ruling the 100m fly and 400m free.

SPORTSWATCH

Bayron trails Aussie by five in Singapore Am Open

SINGAPORE—RUFINO BAYRON SHOT A 69 and Ferdie Aunzo a 68 as they moved up to second and third places, respectively, after three rounds of the Singapore Open Amateur Championship yesterday.

Australian Tim Stewart sustained his fine form, churning out a third straight under-par round—a 69—that kept the Filipinos at bay with a 205 aggregate.

Bayron improved from joint third to second with a 210, in a tie with Thai ace Kiradech Aphibarnrat, who shot a 68.

Meanwhile, the Philippines, behind Mark Fernando and Jhonnel Ababa, nipped Thais Aphibarnrat and Varan Ishrabhakdi on the second playoff hole to win the team title.

Davao FBL opens Oct. 27

A TOTAL OF 16 TEAMS ARE ENTERED IN the three-day Futures Basketball League's (FBL) Mindanao regional tournament to be held at the Golden Oases Gym in Davao City starting today.

There will be five teams competing in the mini division, three in the midgets and eight in the junior category.

The mini teams are Doña Pilar Learning Center, Ateneo de Davao Grade School, Holy Child School of Davao, University of Immaculate Conception and Assumption College while the midget teams are Doña Pilar Learning Center, Holy Child School and Assumption College. Philippine Women's College and Davao Wisdom Academy lead the eight junior squads.

'Stagfighter' known today

THE FOURTH AND FINAL LEG OF THE Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA) 4-stag derby series blasts off today with some 60 matches at the Pasay City Cockpit.

The derby, sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000, will determine the 2007 Stagfighter of the Year from among the group's 28 members. A special trophy will be awarded to the winner, said pit managers Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano.

Bigtime stagfighting returns to the venue on Nov. 9 via the 110 K Battle of the Big Boys 7-Stag Derby.

P2M 6-stag event on

WITH ONLY NINE ENTRIES GARNERING three points apiece after three elimination rounds, competition is wide open in the P2-million "Tayo na sa Antipolo" 6-Stag Derby at the Blue Mountain Sports Arena in Cogeo, Antipolo City.

The fourth set of entries collide today for the right to join the undefeated bets in the 3-stag finals set Oct. 30. The NSA-KC entry of Bingbing Antonio and Ken Cantero, fighting their Ormoc Gold and Sweater crosses, dominated action last Wednesday.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Tri)—Hittheroadjack (1), Tippietylertoo (3), Life Is Delicious (50
Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Glory and Honour (7), Regal Boom/Ziraz (5), Irene's Fantasy (8), Family Jewel (5), Impulsive Decision (4)
Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Starlight Express (1), Northstorm (5), Shining Fame (4), Win Lane (7), White Diamond (6)
Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Sweetsouthernsaint (6), Dazzling Cat (3), Mister Wonderful (7), Good Riddance (1), Mika's Friend (4)
Race 5—(Tri)—Mountain Eagle (5), El Cid (3), Jayvie's Godfather (2)
Race 6—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Lion's Pride (1), Frapuubvel/Simply Angie (8), Material World (7), Sheritt (5), Litupwithdiamonds (9), Perfect Choice (6)
Race 7—Play It Again/Mary Jane Bomb (5), Heart of the Wind (1), Detective Daryll (3), Lord of the Ring (2)
Race 8—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Quant Je Puis (6), Dixie Dash (1), Danehill Dave (2), Golden Fantasy (5), Znarf (4)
Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Kalima (3), Alexis Magic (9), Windlass (13), Rough Red/Kirsten (5), Arctic Desert (7), Phil's Game (12)

Park-Ilagan duel set; it's Lyn vs Vinice

MATCHES TODAY
Park JS vs M. Ilagan, 7 a.m. at Faldo course; L. Mangulabnan vs V. Godio, 7 a.m. (Faldo); E. Rendon vs A. Vasquez, 7 a.m. (Faldo); K. dela Cruz vs C. Superal, 7 a.m. at Norman course; W. Superal vs Koo Jae Min, 7 a.m. (Norman)

GEN. TRIAS, CAVITE—IT WAS A BREEZE for Park Jung-soo, a thriller for Lyn Mangulabnan and a miraculous comeback for Ed Rendon as they barged into the finals of their respective divisions yesterday in the National Tournament of Club Champions presented by INQUIRER GOLF and HSBC at the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club here.

Park, the defending champion from Eastridge, humbled Abe Avena of Mt. Malarayat, 6 and 5, to seal a title duel with Marty Ilagan of Manila Southwoods.

Ilagan, the former national tennis player, ended the giant-killing run of Summit Point's Lino Magpantay, 2 and 1.

The top seeded Mangulabnan of Royal Northwoods, survived a tough challenge from Josefina Palumbarit, 1-up, after 19 holes, to forge a title clash in the women's division with Vinice Godio of Sta. Elena, who reached her second straight finals by upending Leana Farrales of Canlubang, 2 and 1.

Rendon of Forest Hills pulled off the biggest rally of the tournament also backed by Toyota, Callaway, Titleist, Pocari Sweat and Coca-Cola when he rallied from three down with four holes to go to beat Japanese expatriate Sengyo Kato of Alabang.

Rendon capped his stunning win with a birdie on the 18th hole from eight feet. He next faces Andy Vasquez of Wack Wack.

"This (win) is something I won't ever forget," said Rendon, an audit consultant who was already given up for lost when he trailed by four as they teed off on the 15th which he birdied from outside the green.

Vasquez ended the campaign of Iloilo president Frankie Locsin, 2 and 1.

Special Div. semifinals: K. dela Cruz d. M. Legaspi 3 and 1; W. Superal d. J Gobing 3 and 2

SOFTBALL CONGRESS TOP PLAYERS: International Softball Federation president Don Porter (third from left) and secretary general Andrew Lochner Jr. (right) hold softball starter's equipment with Amateur Softball Association of the Philippines president Jean Henri Lhuillier (second from left) and past Asaphil head Harry Angpin at yesterday's kickoff of the ISF Congress at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City. ROMY HOMILLADA

Red Sox pulverize Rockies in opener

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS—Boston Red Sox star Josh Beckett bewildered Colorado batters in a record 13-1 rout Wednesday to open the 103rd World Series, striking out nine in a humbling series debut for the Rockies.

The 27-year-old right-hander, 20-7 in the Major League Baseball season and 4-0 in the playoffs, could become the first starter to go 5-0 in a playoff run if he has the chance to pitch in a fifth game in the best-of-seven final.

"He has proven himself over the whole year how good a pitcher he is and he's stepping up even more right now and showing he's one of the best pitchers in the game," Red Sox slugger Kevin Youkilis said.

"He's doing an unbelievable job for us. He's the guy we want out there in a big game."

None came bigger for the Red Sox, who seek their second title in four seasons after going 86 years without a World Series triumph. They imposed the most lopsided game-one victory in Series history upon the Rockies.

Beckett surrendered only one run while scattering six hits but downplayed his role, saying, "I made pitches when I needed to execute them. That held them off just long enough."

Beckett had allowed Colorado six runs on 10 hits in five innings in losing a June regular-season game to the Rockies but ignored that game rather than studying it in his preparation for a total reversal of fortune.

Red Sox manager Terry Francona noted how Beckett's fastball and breaking ball were the only types of pitches he used until the last of his seven innings.

"As he got a couple innings into the game he got comfortable with the breaking ball and that made him really effective," Francona said. *AFP*

BECKETT: Nine strikeouts

Bustamante crashes out

MARLON MANALO BEAT FRANCISCO "Django" Bustamante, 9-5, yesterday to barge into the third round of the winner's bracket in the Manny Pacquiao International 9-Ball Open at the Hobbies Mall billiards hall.

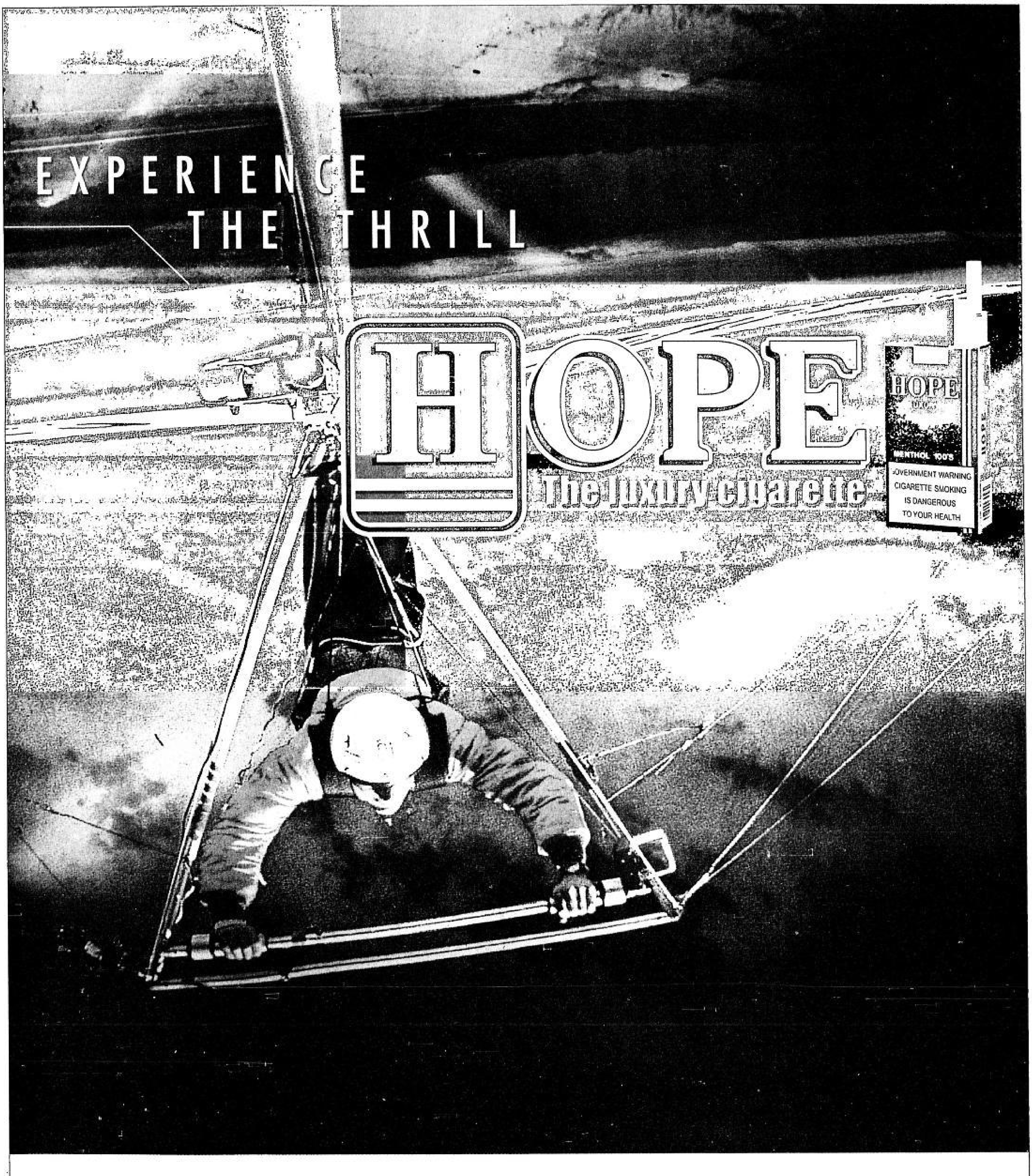
Bustamante eventually bowed out after losing to Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat, 9-7.

Efren "Bata" Reyes also fell by the wayside against little-known Jong-Jong Pangan, 9-8.

Rodrigo Geronimo shared the limelight with a pair of stunning victories over former US Open winner Rodney Morris, 9-2, and former Asian 9-Ball Tour champion Ramil Gallego, 9-7.

National Junior champion Mark Mendoza also stayed on the right side of the draw with a pair of 9-7 wins against Jay-Jay Escultor and Monching Mistica.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor



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IN THIS ISSUE

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- **Gov't,** business urged to act on 6 crucial areas /B4

Imports rose 3.8% from Jan. to Aug.

NSO says bill for the period stands at $35.3B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S IMPORTS ROSE 1.8 PERCENT TO $4.97 billion in August from a year ago, slowing down from the double-digit growth posted the previous month.

This brought total imports for the first eight months of the year to $35.32 billion, up 3.8 percent from that of the same period last year, the National Statistics Office yesterday reported.

With exports hitting $32.83 billion from January to August, the country's balance of trade (BOT) stood at a deficit of $2.5 billion during the eight-month period.

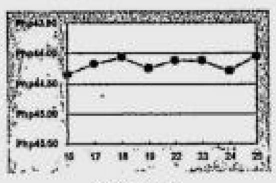
The BOT is the difference between the dollar revenues earned from exports and the amount of spending for imports. A deficit means a country experiences more dollar outflows than inflows in its external trading.

In the case of the Philippines, an increase in imports normally indicates a rise in exports in the months ahead because a huge portion of imports are raw materials and intermediate goods used in the production of export products.

Electronics imports in August amounted to $2.3 billion, rising by 4.6 percent year-on-year. These are composed mostly of items processed in the country intended for

IMPORTS/ B4

INDICATORS



OCTOBER

Shares rise 0.1%

SHARES YESTERDAY EDGED UP IN the absence of fresh leads, with investors awaiting third quarter earnings results and the US Federal Reserve's next move on interest rates.

The Philippine Stock Exchange Index climbed 4.31 points, or 0.1 percent, to 3,767.78. The index rose 2.7 percent over the two previous sessions. Gainers outnumbered decliners 60 to 52, while 57 stocks were unchanged. *AP*

CURRENCIES

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Credit upgrade likely to happen in '08, says UBS

Investment bank sees peso hitting 41 against the dollar by next year

By Doris C. Dumlao

INVESTMENT BANKING GIANT UBS expects a sovereign credit upgrade for the Philippines next year, citing the decline in the country's debt stock, the peso's appreciation and the government's privatization program.

Although revenue agencies fell short of their tax collection targets for the first half of the year, the government hopes to make up for this shortfall by lining up big-ticket assets for sale.

This is expected to support the government's bid to cap its fiscal deficit to P63 billion this year, and balance the budget next year.

In its Philippine market strategy dated Oct. 18, UBS said the country's debt as a ratio of gross domestic product (GDP) could continue to decline, even if the deficit-to-GDP ratio would hit 3 percent against the government's target of 0.9 percent.

"Falling debt levels could result in a credit rating upgrade for the Philippines as early as 2008," UBS said.

The Philippine government's long-term foreign currency credit is currently rated at two notches below the much-coveted investment grade by Fitch, two notches below by Standard & Poor's, and three notches short by Moody's.

"We think a structurally strong peso could help the Philippine government's fiscal position, as over 50 percent of its debt is denominated in US dollars," the investment bank said.

The Philippine economist of UBS expects the peso to appreciate to 41 against the US dollar by end-2008.

Furthermore, UBS said, the government's successful sale of its power assets could help finance Napocor's $7-billion debt, which is contingently guaranteed by the government.

"A stronger peso and the government's privatization of its power assets have significant positive impact on the government's balance sheet clean-up efforts," UBS said.

The investment bank added that drivers of the country's growth in GDP—forecast to hit 7.2 percent in 2007 and 6.5 percent in 2008, much higher than the historical average of 4 percent—were intact.

Also, the possibility of further interest rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve and the benign domestic inflation could mean a less stringent monetary policy by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Privatization of assets outside the power sector is also seen to provide funding for the government's pump-priming efforts. UBS estimates that the government could generate $1 billion from the sale of these assets.

Nutrition and governance

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

NATIONAL NUTRITION SITUATION

CATEGORY	AGE GROUP 0-5	AGE GROUP 6-10
Underweight	27%	26%
Underheight	30	36
Vitamin A Deficiency	40	N/A
Iron Deficiency (Anemia)	32	37

OVER THE PAST WEEK, WE HAVE been doing both library and field research on the connection between nutrition and governance in the Philippines.

It was very gratifying to visit the Nutrition Center of the Philippines (NCP), a nongovernment organization established the same year that the National Nutrition Council (NNC) was founded.

Dr. Florentino Solon (0918-9175197) was the NNC's founding director and has been NCP president for the last 32 years. It was from him that we got critical information relevant to the alarming numbers of malnutrition listed on the table.

According to Solon, the number and size of brain cells grow during the first four years. From ages 5 to 10, it is important for the child to utilize these brain cells during the initial elementary school years. However, cognitive development during this stage may be severely hampered where there is lack of iron or anemia. Unfortunately, the 32 percent incidence of anemia in the first stage worsens to an alarming 37 percent in the second stage.

Our greatest asset

On the other hand, Vitamin A deficiency results in the weakening of the immune system. This makes the child susceptible to sickness and disease. The table shows that this deficiency may be at 40 percent in the first stage. Though data is not available for the second stage category, it is widely believed that this condition will worsen.

It has often been said that our greatest asset is our well-educated population. However, we are rapidly losing that asset. One large factor behind this is malnutrition, which is adversely affecting the education of our children, specially in the early stage.

This is partly why millions of pesos of our tax money are being poured into feeding programs for elementary school children. For how can one study if one is hungry?

But it is not only quantity that matters. More importantly, it is the quality of nutrition in the food that spells the difference between cognitive development and stagnancy.

Here is where the question of governance comes in.

A case study

The Norwegian Mission Alliance (NMA) is one of several nongovernment organizations concerned with malnutrition and education.

NMA's Ana Marie Ocampo Mabini (0918-3307242) cites a program offered by the Nutrition Center of the Philippines. She likens this to "teaching people how to fish" for long-run sustainability, compared to the short-term "giving them fish to eat."

She has more faith in the NCP's FAITH (Food Available In the Home)—a low-cost undertaking that aims to increase production of common fruits and vegetables in one's backyard—than in government feeding programs.

Ocampo cited a recent NMA sponsored FAITH Program held last September in General Mariano Alvarez, Cavite. Thirty community leaders took the FAITH "Train the Trainers" Program, where each participant is expected to echo the FAITH learnings in their respective communities. From the last eight NMA sponsored FAITH programs in the preceding two years, she has seen the practicality and benefits of this program, noting an impressive 80-percent implementation rate.

Perhaps the most graphic representation of this thrust is the "Magic Square Garden." In a square meter of lot, 20 to 30 plants may be grown—*malunggay* and other nutritious vegetables such as *alugbati*, camote tops, *kangkong* and *pechay*.

"I've seen so many nutrition programs over the last 32 years," Solon says. "But thanks to Gov. Joey Lina and his wife, Lorie, as well as Reverend Patricia Capwell who introduced this to us, FAITH has become the ideal organic food production program."

Mayors role

On the other hand, Mabini hopes that "more mayors get to know about FAITH because they can use their existing nutrition and education budgets to support it."

"Furthermore, their help is needed for support, follow-up, and multiplication of these FAITH projects," she adds.

Prime movers

For a strong nation, we must have good governance that will promote the nutrition needed for a well educated workforce. The mayors can be the prime movers for this potential grassroots movement.

FAITH is one program that should be considered in any nationwide nutrition strategy. Those interested in FAITH may contact Solon or NCP's Mary Anne Trillana (0920-7096732 or landline number 816-4240); email info@ncp.org.ph, or consult its website at http://www.ncp.org.ph.

(The author is chair of Agriwatch, former secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary for Agriculture, and Trade and Industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil @ yahoo.com or telefax (02) 852-2112).

BIR expects heftier growth in tax collection

By Michelle V. Remo

INTERNAL REVENUE COMMISSIONER Lilian Hefti said the Bureau of Internal Revenue's tax collections as of the third quarter had grown faster than the growth posted by the economy.

Hefti said the third-quarter figures showed that the government's tax collection was already responding to the increase in economic activity.

The BIR collected P187.2 billion in July to September, representing a 15.3-percent growth from the tax collected in the third quarter of last year.

In the first quarter, the economy grew 7.1 percent in real terms and 9.8 percent in nominal terms. In the second quarter, economic growth stood at 7.5 percent in real terms and 10.2 percent in nominal terms.

Analysts have projected that the economy would post decent growth in the third quarter, although at a pace slower than the first and second quarter growth.

Despite the robust economic growth in the first and second quarters, tax collections grew minimally. According to the BIR, tax collections rose by 6.4 percent in the first quarter and 4.45 percent in the second quarter.

The BIR's failure to raise tax collections commensurately with the growth of the economy has led to criticism about the agency's revenue raising efficiency. Because economic expansion means higher income for individual and corporate taxpayers, the growth in tax collections should match the growth of the economy.

"The 15.3-percent growth in tax collections already exceeded the nominal growth of the economy. We (BIR) are implementing measures to improve tax collections and working hard to meet the targets set for us," Hefti said.

An official from the Department of Finance, mother agency of the BIR, earlier said the inability of the BIR to respond sufficiently to economic growth, in terms of tax collection, should be addressed, especially with the financial assistance granted by foreign donors to improve tax efficiency.

According to a finance official, foreign lenders are expecting to see an improvement in the BIR's performance once their technical and financial assistance programs have been fully implemented and disbursed.

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Sugar prices starting to stabilize, says SRA

By Amy R. Remo

SUGAR PRICES ARE BEGINNING TO STABILize following the release of more sugar to the domestic market, according to the Sugar Regulatory Administration.

Preliminary data from the SRA show that as of Oct. 25, domestic sugar was selling at the mill site for P1,130 a 50-kilogram bag.

At this price, domestic sugar comes out to about P38-P39 a kilo, with the additional cost of shipping and handling, SRA fees, refining fees and traders' margin, among others.

Last week, domestic sugar was trading at P1,315.14 a 50-kg bag or about P39-P42 a kilo.

"We can expect sugar prices to further go down soon to P37-P38 a kilo," said SRA Administrator Rafael Coscolluela.

The SRA attributed the decline to the implementation of Sugar Order No. 1-A, which required the industry to sell 89 percent of total production to the local market, and then allocate the rest for the US and world markets.

Prior to this order, only 80 percent of production was sold to the domestic market.

According to Coscolluela, tight supply and high sugar prices were mainly due to increased withdrawals, or increased local buying of sugar.

"Withdrawals as of Oct. 15 this year were higher by 39 percent compared to withdrawals in the same period in 2006," he noted.

Coscolluela said that according to "industry-wide speculation," the increased local consumption of the country's sugar stocks may be attributed to reduced sugar smuggling.

Over the past few years, the actual local demand for domestic sugar has gone down to 1.9 million metric tons.

Meanwhile, actual domestic sugar withdrawals as of September this year amounted to some 1.7 million metric tons.

Coscolluela said that the agency and industry efforts to curb technical smuggling and misdeclarations may already be bearing fruit.

Coscolluela said the SRA may retain the sugar allocations for the rest of the year, although the agency will still monitor sugar prices, production and withdrawals every month.

"We may issue a new allocation by January next year when sugar production reaches its peak," he said.

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Growth Fund - Peso	1.94910	2.00864
Equity Fund - Peso	1.00000	
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.4278	1.4235

* Note These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

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Gov't, business urged to act on 6 crucial areas

Keys to improving country's competitiveness

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE business community must focus their efforts on improving six critical sectors if the country is to become globally competitive by 2010, the cochair of the National Competitiveness Council (NCC) said yesterday.

More importantly, NCC cochair Cesar B. Bautista said the public and private sectors must join hands if efforts to improve the local business scene were to succeed.

Speaking during the 33rd Philippine Business Conference and Expo, he identified the critical areas as competitive human resources; management expertise in public offices; financing for micro, small and medium enterprises; reduced transaction costs and improved flows; infrastructure; and energy.

Without improvements in these areas, he said the country would likely remain an afterthought for investors who instinctively go to countries with more competitive business environment.

Bautista said that despite the recent rise in investment inflows, the country's share in the foreign direct investments remained low compared to those received by its neighbors.

"The reason we're not getting it is obvious: Competitiveness," he said.

The NCC chief also noted that while economic growth figures were impressive, these numbers must be viewed in the context of the country's growing population.

"Because our population keeps growing, our per capita GDP (gross domestic product) is small," he said, adding that the Thais are, on the average, three times wealthier than their Filipino counterparts while Malaysians are five times wealthier on a per capita basis.

"Let's not even talk about Singapore," he said.

The six critical sectors outlined by Bautista are being discussed during the NCC Summit, which is ending, with its recommendations to be submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In the field of human resources, Bautista said the country must invest more in education to keep its edge in English and catch up in the areas of math and science.

He said the NCC was aiming at a 30-percent improvement in the English skills of local graduates by 2010.

The body also looks at the access of small businesses to capital which remains tight.

"The problem here is not the lack of money but the difficulty of access [to funds] by SMEs," Bautista said.

He said efforts must also be exerted toward cutting the cost of transactions in terms of time and energy expended, especially in dealing with regulators.

In this regard, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry is also at the forefront of negotiating with regulators to ease the entry and exit of goods to facilitate greater foreign trade.

Bautista said the government must lower the cost of energy in the country.

"We have many talented Filipinos in many fields," Bautista pointed out, making a pitch for unified action on the public and private fronts. "But our problem is that we don't have a great team. We should start working together."

MOST OUTSTANDING BUSINESS LEADER

San Miguel Corp. president and CEO Ramon S. Ang (2nd from right) receives his award as the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Most Outstanding Business Leader for 2007 from Vice President Noli de Castro as PCCI president Samie Lim (left) and PBC chair Ambassador Francis Chua (right) look on. The award was given on the first day of the three-day 33rd Philippine Business Conference and Exposition.

PNOC-EC seeking partners

By Abigail L. Ho

PNOC EXPLORATION CORP., A SUBsidiary of Philippine National Oil Co., is looking for prospective partners for the development of Service Contract 59 in the West Balabac area in Southwest Palawan.

PNOC-EC president Rafael Del Pilar said the state firm was willing to let go of as much as 60 percent of its 100-percent share in the service contract.

"The bidding documents will be released in November, and we will give (interested groups) a couple of months to submit their bids. We hope to see activity (in the area) within next year," he said.

Del Pilar said it was still premature to discuss the petroleum block's potential reserves despite having available seismic data on SC 59 which, he said, was still on the "technical development level."

SC 59 covers an area spanning about 1.5 million hectares in Southwest Palawan. The contract was awarded to PNOC-EC on Jan. 13, 2006.

PNOC-EC last year started discussions for a possible farm-in agreement with Australian firm Tap Oil Ltd. and Swedish company Lundin Oil Ltd. However, no deal was forged with either of the two firms.

PNOC-EC has earmarked P21 billion for various upstream and downstream activities from this year to 2014. Of this, P1.3 billion would be spent this year.

The year's budget included P657 million for petroleum exploration, P485 million for coal exploration and development, and P164 million for downstream activities.

The bulk of the state firm's petroleum exploration budget would go to further studies on highly prospective areas—the Calamian, West Calamian and Balabac areas, which are covered by SC 57, 58 and 59, respectively.

Nearly P103 million has been allotted for the Marine Seismic Undertaking, which PNOC-EC is doing in partnership with China National Offshore Oil Co. and Vietnam Oil and Gas Corp.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE PHILIPPINE NAVY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
Repair of Various Philippine Navy Projects at NFWM

1. The Armed Forces of the Philippines, through the PN Bids and Awards Committee, intends to apply the sum as stated below being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the following Philippine Navy Projects. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

Nomenclature/Activity	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date/Time		Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline for Submission/ Opening of Bids	
Supply & Delivery and Installation of Four (4) Units R.C. Fenders Pile Clusters of Five (5) Piles/Clusters of NFWM	Php 3,031,250.00	October 31, 2007 9:00 AM	November 12, 2007 9:00 AM	Php 3,000.00
Supply & Delivery of Various Tools for NLC Motorpool	Php 4,000,000.00			Php 3,000.00

2. The Armed Forces of the Philippines now invites Eligible Bidders for the **Repair of Various Philippine Navy Projects at NFWM**. Delivery of the goods being procured and description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II and Section III of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from PN BAC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from ***8:00 AM to 5:00 PM*, Monday to Friday**.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount *Mentioned in Para 1*. The method of payment will be *in the **form of cash***. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The *Armed Forces of the Philippines* will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on ***October 31, 2007, 9:00 AM*** at **Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee, Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City**.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before ***November 12, 2007, 9:00 A.M.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Surety Bond or Manager's Check. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
7. **Bid opening** shall be on ***November 12, 2007, 9:00 AM*** at **Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee, Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the PN Bids and Awards Committee
BNS, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
*Contact Person: **CDR GLICERIO P VILLANUEVA PN***
Cel Nr: 0917-8599-434 / 0918-2016-522
Tel Nr: 616-8218, 815-3420, 843-4416 & 815-8093 local 6341

(Sgd.) **ADRIANO V MUNAR JR**
CAPT PN (GSC)
Chairman, PNBAC

(PDI—October 26, 2007)

Social responsibility

Corporate Securities Info

Raul J. Palabrica

LAST WEEK, I ATTENDED A MULTIsectoral conference on corporate social responsibility in Asia.

The meeting was attended by representatives of developing countries and executives of multinational companies that operate manufacturing facilities in this part of the world.

Corporate social responsibility, or CSR as it is popularly known in the business circles, is loosely defined as the moral obligation of private corporations to contribute to the economic growth and social development of the communities they operate in.

The most common form of CSR is donating money, materials or services to projects that can help improve the living conditions of the people in the areas where companies do business.

These acts of philanthropy are considered badges of good corporate behavior. And companies are quick to use them for public relations purposes or to justify the availment of tax exemption privileges.

Without downgrading the value of the traditional concept of CSR, the conference reviewed, among others, the manner by which multinational companies that have factories in Asian countries engage in CSR activities.

Business linkage

The participants agreed that while globalization might have contributed to the spread of financial wealth to developing countries, it has brought along the problems of pollution, exploitation of workers and tax evasion.

This is the area which multinational companies that have taken advantage of the low cost of production—both human and technical—in this region should focus their CSR activities on.

The new tack of CSR is to persuade national or local governments in a corporation's area of operation to strictly enforce its labor laws, especially those that relate to wages, work safety, medical treatment and post-employment.

While waiting for the bureaucrats to act, or if no action appears to be forthcoming in the future, the CSR-minded corporation can use its "power of the purse" to force the local people they do business with to, at their own expense, comply with labor laws.

Using the carrot-and-stick approach, the corporation can refuse to enter into contract for goods and services with businessmen who do not comply with the host country's labor laws. Those who meet the grade can be rewarded with lucrative long-term contracts.

Labor laws

The issue of compliance with labor laws sparked an intense discussion between a representative of a multinational company that operates factories in China and an official of a government agency in China similar to our Board of Investments.

The representative stated that the company pays the required minimum wage to its workers and that it always reminds its local partner to comply with safety rules in the work premises.

By way of an aside, the company executive said that because of the negligence of the Chinese government in the enforcement of its labor laws, multinational companies are obliged to take on that task instead.

Earlier, it was reported that violation of labor laws is rampant in China (the "world's factory," as described in the presentation) and that between 2001 and 2005, China's coal mines claimed 10 lives every week.

Although the imputation has some basis, the Chinese official did not let the remarks go unanswered.

He admitted that China has its faults in the enforcement of labor laws. But, he asked, if the multinational companies are uncomfortable with that situation, why do they insist on putting up their factories in China? "Why don't you go to Africa where there are millions of people who need work?"

Minimum wage

The company executive dodged the question. He replied that their factories have contributed to the improvement of the living conditions of the local residents, and that the company will continue to work closely with the authorities to enforce the labor laws.

The answer did not satisfy the Chinese official. He retorted that if the company was really serious about CSR, it should pay more than the prescribed minimum wage to enable the workers to have a bigger take home pay.

After all, he added, the companies that have taken advantage of China's low wages impose an average mark-up of 500 percent for "Made in China" products.

He ended with the question: "Why not reduce that profit margin and share some of it with the workers and not hide under the minimum wage requirement?"

The executive did not respond to the challenge. The representatives of similarly situated countries nodded in agreement with the view of the feisty Chinese official.

In sum, the conference gave the participants a good opportunity to exchange ideas on the best way to implement CSR activities in their respective areas.

The consensus was, there is no one-size-fits-all definition for CSR. It's sufficient to describe it as a voluntary commitment of corporations to share with the community the blessings of their success without expecting any remuneration.

Incidentally, our country's CSR experience was shown through an audio-visual presentation of the programs and activities of the Philippine Business for Social Progress.

(For feedback, please write to rpalabrica@inquirer. com. ph.)

Imports rose 3.8% from Jan. to Aug.

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export as intermediate goods. Eventually, these would be turned into consumer electronics products.

Electronics is the country's biggest export earner.

The rise in electronics imports in August marked a slowdown from the 12.9 percent posted the previous month, thereby pulling down growth in overall imports.

Jonathan Ravelas, market strategist for Banco do Oro Universal Bank, said the slowdown in imports in August was likely due to the end of inventory buildup by some firms.

He said some companies already built up inventory in July to prepare for higher consumer spending for Christmas, and therefore reduced imports in August.

Following electronics, the country's second biggest imports were mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials. This group comprised $970.7 million of the total imports bill for August, rising by 5.9 percent year-on-year.

The third biggest imports were industrial machinery and equipment, accounting for $176.2 million of the total import bill for the month, 2.8 percent higher than that of the same month a year ago.

CURRENCIES

October 25, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.700967	1.000000	44.1290
Japan	Yen	0.006136	0.008754	0.3863
United Kingdom	Pound	1.436703	2.049600	90.4468
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.090435	0.129014	5.6933
Switzerland	Franc	0.598350	0.853606	37.6688
Canada	Dollar	0.723766	1.032525	45.5643
Singapore	Dollar	0.479786	0.684463	30.2047
Australia	Dollar	0.628896	0.897183	39.5918
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.860810	2.654632	117.1463
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.187420	0.267373	11.7989
Brunei	Dollar	0.478149	0.682128	30.1016
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000076	0.000109	0.0048
Thailand	Baht	0.022211	0.031686	1.3983
UAE	Dirham	0.190906	0.272346	12.0184
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.426600	62.9544
Korea	Won	0.000764	0.001090	0.0481
China	Yuan**	0.093555	0.133465	5.8897
Denmark	Kroner	0.134177	0.191417	8.4470
India	Rupee	0.017715	0.025272	1.1152
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.208002	0.296736	13.0947
New Zealand	Dollar	0.525660	0.749906	33.0926
Sweden	Kroner	0.108480	0.154758	6.8293
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.021526	0.030709	1.3552

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Oct. 24, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen
** Asian time closing rate as of Oct. 24, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 25, 2007)

52-WKS HIGH	52-WKS LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	6.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8.7	8.7	8.6	8.6	97,000
73	43	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	62	63	62	63	381,400
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	68	69.5	68	69	1,142,800
748	528	China Banking Corp.	715	715	715	715	630
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	10,000
75.5	44	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company	61	61.5	61	61.5	2,682,800
65.5	34.5	Philippine National Bank	49	49.5	49	49	979,500
68	42	Philippine Savings Bank	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	500
39.57	15.65	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	28	28.5	27.5	28	2,547,800
90	55	Security Bank Corp.	76.5	76.5	75.5	76	592,400
66	44.51	Union Bank of the Philippines	50	50	50	50	65,600
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.92	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	18,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	2	2	1.98	1.98	1,793,000
16.25	4.35	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	13.75	14	13.25	13.5	2,100,800
1.6	0.5	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	550,000
42.5	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	42	42	5,000
5.9	4.9	I-Remit Inc.	5.3	5.4	5.2	5.3	1,137,000
5	2.95	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.45	3.55	3.45	3.55	583,000
3.1	1.1	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.94	2	1.94	2	16,000
1,130.00	241	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	1,035.00	1,110.00	1,035.00	1,105.00	21,060
2,355.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,320.00	2,335.00	2,320.00	2,335.00	1,080
1.94	1.3	Vantage Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.54	1.56	1,261,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.2	5.2	5	5.1	4,500,000
70.5	49	First Gen Corp.	61.5	62	61.5	62	1,528,000
92	51	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	85.5	85.5	85	85.5	249,700
17.5	8.8	Manila Water Company Inc.	17	17	16.5	16.75	847,300
105.45	23.18	Manila Electric Company	82	83	82	82.5	1,000,300
7.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	7.4	7.6	7.4	7.6	27,106,000
6.8	3.9	Petron Corp.	6.7	6.7	6.4	6.4	3,982,000
14.75	6.6	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	35,000
1.9	0.99	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.48	1.58	1.48	1.54	8,819,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.2	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	47,000
2.95	1.66	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.84	1.86	1.84	1.86	248,000
2.4	1.08	CADP Group Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	3,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26	26	26	26	500
61	39	Jollibee Foods Corp.	52	52	52	52	602,100
9.1	5.4	Pancake House Inc.	8.5	9	8.5	9	11,000
0.98	0.5	RFM Corp.	0.76	0.76	0.68	0.7	1,750,000
3.8	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	100,000
80	58	San Miguel Corp. A	58.5	58.5	58	58	48,500
88	59.5	San Miguel Corp. B	61.5	61.5	61	61	77,700
0.66	0.31	Swift Foods Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.44	0.44	420,000
6.5	2	Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	15,000
22	13.75	Universal Robina Corp.	14	14.5	14	14.25	10,601,000
0.55	0.26	Vitarich Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	400,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	2.64	EEI Corp.	5.5	5.6	5.4	5.6	1,192,000
21.5	6	Federal Resources Investment Group Inc.	13	13	13	13	5,000
9.2	4.95	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.3	118,000
7	2.3	Republic Cement Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	113,000
2	0.44	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.08	1.1	9,028,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.45	4.55	4.4	4.5	738,000
2.4	1.31	Euro-Med Laboratories Phil. Inc.	1.98	2.2	1.98	2.2	23,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.17	Picop Resources Inc.	0.39	0.41	0.39	0.4	8,630,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	2.55	A. Soriano Corp.	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.25	28,000
0.17	0.039	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.115	0.11	0.11	13,250,000
1.28	0.235	APC Group Inc.	0.72	0.73	0.72	0.72	4,570,000
3.05	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. A	2.85	3	2.85	2.9	631,000
3.7	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. B	2.9	3	2.9	2.95	204,000
0.018	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	18,000,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	4,400,000
9.7	5.6	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	7	7.1	7	7	23,648,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	269,100,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	2,245,000
1.38	0.54	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.78	0.79	0.78	0.79	130,000
1.5	0.33	Asia Amalgamated Holdings Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	140,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.34	2.34	2.3	2.32	2,423,000
615	397.92	Ayala Corp.	590	600	590	600	770,470
5.8	1.42	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.35	5,838,000
10.25	4.7	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.4	1,497,000
6.9	1.08	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	20,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	10,000
3.55	1.54	House of Investments Inc.	2.06	2.06	2.02	2.02	176,000
14.5	7.8	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	11	11	11	11	146,200
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	20,000
2.6	1.2	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. A	2	2	2	2	10,000
2.65	1.42	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. B	2	2	2	2	10,000
11.5	1.48	Minerales Industrias Corp.	6.9	7	6.7	6.9	3,585,000
8.5	2.9	PAL Holdings Inc.	7	7.1	6.9	6.9	578,000
0.28	0.013	Pacifica Inc. A	0.215	0.225	0.21	0.22	279,460,000
0.75	0.185	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.47	0.47	1,690,000
2.1	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	30,000
452.5	261.34	SM Investments Corp.	375	375	370	370	486,920
2.1	1.08	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	13,000
0.73	0.13	Sinophil Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	4,310,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	18.25	18.25	18	18	16,200
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	300,000
1.1	0.26	Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	10,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	1	A Brown Company Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.38	1.38	240,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	7.6	7.7	7.6	7.7	11,000
1.06	0.32	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	50,000
19.25	11.88	Ayala Land Inc.	16.5	16.75	16	16.25	15,174,200
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.34	1.36	1.34	1.34	776,000
2.04	1.56	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp.A	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	30,000
2.1	1.7	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp.B	1.84	1.84	1.82	1.82	200,000
0.86	0.39	Crown Equities Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	320,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.44	1,060,000
0.99	0.52	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.77	0.77	7,550,000
0.47	0.055	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	6,860,000
1.48	0.61	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.08	4,091,000
2.44	1.26	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.82	1.84	1.8	1.82	31,362,000
0.49	0.11	Gotesco Land Inc. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	930,000
1.12	0.31	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.6	0.6	710,000
4.6	1.85	Megaworld Corp.	4.35	4.4	4.25	4.3	12,981,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.8	4.8	4.75	4.8	355,000
0.87	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.5	0.53	0.5	0.53	1,660,000
23	14	Robinson Land Corp.	20	20.25	20	20	2,954,300
5.9	1.52	SM Development Corp.	4.15	4.2	4.15	4.2	520,000
13.5	6.96	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12	12	11.75	12	4,129,300
3.25	1.22	Shang Properties Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.34	2.4	1,101,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	510,000
0.49	0.09	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.5	5.6	12,736,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	18.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	32.5	32.5	32.5	32.5	134,900
11.75	8	GMA Network Inc.	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.5	332,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.46	476,000
1,745.00	1,110.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,725.00	1,745.00	1,725.00	1,735.00	73,800
3,285.00	2,250.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	3,090.00	3,090.00	3,065.00	3,075.00	75,750
8.1	4.8	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	1,865,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	100,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	9.5	9.6	9.5	9.6	213,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	8.7	8.8	8.7	8.8	2,586,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.042	0.042	0.041	0.041	22,600,000
29.5	8.5	Imperial Resources Inc. A	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,300
2.9	1.48	Ionics Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	184,000
0.32	0.044	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.195	0.2	0.19	0.19	16,000,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	36,000
0.0725	0.03	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.055	0.055	0.0525	0.055	84,500,000
5.8	1.34	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.9	3.1	2.9	3	9,415,000
		TRANPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1,000
6.8	3.6	Asian Terminals Inc.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	1,000
42.5	18.5	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	40.5	41	40	40.5	1,499,200
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	6,000
6	2.16	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	10,000
4.55	2.8	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	4,000
0.98	0.32	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.6	0.6	1,840,000
1.2	0.5	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	20,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc.	3.1	3.15	3.1	3.15	499,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.96	Macroasia Corp.	5.2	5.4	5.2	5.4	1,467,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.25	12.5	49,300
30	10.5	Paxys Inc.	11.25	11.75	11.25	11.5	3,683,800
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	40,200,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.5	484,000
21.25	7.8	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	15.5	15.5	15	15.25	966,600
14.25	8.9	Benguet Corp. A	12	12	12	12	5,100
10.5	1.8	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	8.5	9.4	8.2	9.3	4,666,000
3.1	0.57	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	2.44	2.5	2.4	2.5	116,512,000
0.39	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.33	11,510,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	3,870,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.026	10,500,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	18,000,000
30	1.98	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	23.5	24.75	23.5	24	6,479,100
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	27,800,000
9.7	3.5	Philex Mining Corp.	9.2	9.4	9.2	9.3	17,341,000
43.5	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	40	40	40	40	93,100
1.36	0.47	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.98	0.98	0.96	0.97	990,000
1.8	0.65	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.26	524,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	1,100,000
0.029	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.024	0.026	0.024	0.025	465,000,000
0.03	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	47,900,000
29	8.6	PNOC Exploration Corp. B	22	22	19	19	300
11.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10	11.25	9.9	11	463,000
0.032	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.027	0.028	0.027	0.028	582,600,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	952.18 UP	8.50	15,986,670	504,869,535.00
Industrial	4,647.81 DOWN	28.39	82,238,100	696,058,665.00
Holding Firms	2,135.28 UP	24.57	637,729,590	971,766,925.00
Property	1,713.78 DOWN	15.30	106,510,800	562,075,820.00
Service	1,884.25 DOWN	3.09	147,674,050	558,371,605.00
Mining & Oil	7,926.32 UP	144.51	1,391,004,200	1,012,774,505.00
All Shares Index	2,340.33 UP	0.51		
PSEI	3,767.78 UP	4.31		
		GRAND TOTALS	2,381,143,410	4,305,917,055.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK PSE

Philam sales up

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PHILAM PLANS Inc. reported a 37.5-percent increase in its sales from January to September to P3.3 billion from P2.4 billion in the same period last year, largely driven by the sale of pension plans.

"The pension market will continue to grow. There is an enormous opportunity in life and education plans with life plans as one of the fastest growing segment," Philam Plans president Jack Howell said in a briefing yesterday.

Howell said the pre-need industry was getting sales from plan holders who are shifting to quality pre-need providers.

"The growth comes from renewed interest in the industry with the shift to quality," Howell said.

As of September, Philam Plans has paid out P707 million worth of plan benefits and projected that it will pay another P174 million between October and December.

Philam Plans has approximately 300,000 plan holders.

It has the biggest trust fund as of December 2006 at P29.1 billion, which is primarily invested in government securities, and partly in stocks.

EIB SAVINGS BANK, INC.

Cebu South Road, Barangay Bulacao, Talisay Cebu City

STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of September 30, 2007

ASSETS

		AMOUNT
Cash and Cash Items	P	563,043
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		1,570,613
Due from Other Banks		32,656,287
Unquoted Debt Securities Classified as Loans (Net)		28,352,209
Receivables from Customers (Net)		4,656,394
Bank Premises, Furnitures, Fixtures, & Equipments (Net)		944,528
Other Assets (Net):		
Others		610,774
TOTAL ASSETS	P	69,353,848

LIABILITIES

Deposit Liabilities		2,029,927
Other Liabilities		2,075,038
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	4,104,965

STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY

Capital Stock	P	50,000,000
Retained Earnings		16,635,920
Undivided Profits		(1,387,037)
TOTAL STOCK HOLDERS' EQUITY	P	65,248,883
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND STOCK HOLDERS' EQUITY	P	69,353,848

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jaime C. Gonzalez
Chairman/Director

Alfredo M. Yao
Director

PRINCIPAL OFFICER

Manuel C. Valdez
President

Melvin B. Cañedo
Treasurer

Other Information:

1. Non-Performing Loans (NPLs)	P	535,721
2. Ratio of NPLs to Total Loan Portfolio (TLP)		4.42%
3. Classified Loans and Other Risk Assets		4,676,000
4. General Provision for Loan Losses		44,728
5. Specific Provision for Loan Losses		7,425,748
6. Return on Equity (ROE)		-4.95%
7. DOSRI Loans and Receivables		-
8. Past Due DOSRI Loans and Receivables		-
9. Ratio of Past Due DOSRI Loans and Receivables to TLP		
10. Percent Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
a. 6% for Small Enterprises		9.43%
b. 2% for Medium Enterprises		3.42%
11. Capital Adequacy Ration (CAR) on Solo Basis, under Circular No. 538		
a. Total CAR		124.60%
b. Tier 1 CAR		124.41%

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

I / WE, *Melvin B. Cañedo* and *Manuel C. Valdez* of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief

(Sgd.) MELVIN B. CAÑEDO
Treasurer

(Sgd.) MANUEL C. VALDEZ
President

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 22th day of October, 2007, affiant exhibiting to me his/her/their Community Tax No.00703747 issued at Cebu on January 04, 2007 and Community Tax No.01576375 issued at Manila on January 03, 2007.

(Sgd.) Ismael C. Billena, Jr.
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2007
PTR No. 0311455J; 1.11.07 - Makati City
Roll of Attorneys No. 40560
Life Member Roll No. 03766
IBP# 605573, 1.8.04 - Manila 4

Doc. No. 403
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Book No. IV
Series of 2007

MEMBER OF THE PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION (PDIC) Maximum insurance for each depositor P250,000

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Ang Bangkong May Damdaming Bayan

BALANCE SHEET
(Head Office and Branches)
As of September 30, 2007

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Items	P	7,338,177,719.69
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		44,011,772,939.30
Due from Other Banks		897,702,881.34
Financial Assets at Fair Value through Profit or Loss		5,398,928,147.18
Available-for-Sale Financial Assets-Net		96,665,330,069.61
Held-to-Maturity (HTM) Financial Assets-Net		16,830,842,935.37
Unquoted Debt Securities Classified as Loans-Net		2,103,598,796.40
Investments in Non-Marketable Equity Security-Net		978,094,377.93
Loans and Receivables:		
Interbank Loans Receivable		27,695,970,091.28
Loans and Receivables - Others		104,442,642,753.53
Loans and Receivables Arising from RA/CA/PR/SLB		22,985,413,638.63
Other Financial Assets		4,802,132,181.22
Equity Investments in Subsidiaries, Associates and Joint Ventures-Net		1,601,448,360.68
Bank Premises, Furniture,Fixtures & Equipment-Net		4,558,283,659.77
Real and Other Properties Acquired-Net		9,865,956,968.38
Other Assets-Net		20,892,821,872.92
TOTAL ASSETS	P	371,069,117,413.23

LIABILITIES

Deposit Liabilities	P	279,502,010,889.03
Due to Other Banks		12,038,142.11
Bills Payable:		
BSP (Rediscounting and Other Advances)		437,138,155.64
Others		30,575,196,037.29
Unsecured Subordinated Debt-Net		6,756,000,000.00
Due to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		96,674,178.65
Other Financial Liabilities		2,231,619,029.72
Other Liabilities		16,742,326,300.81
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	336,353,004,733.25

STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY

Capital Stock	P	11,971,000,000.00
Other Capital Accounts		11,947,660,719.77
Retained Earnings		10,797,451,960.21
TOTAL STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY		34,716,112,679.98
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	P	371,069,117,413.23

CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS

Guarantees Issued	P	237,584,058.32
Financial Standby Letters of Credit		311,968,849.25
Performance Standby Letters of Credit		108,571,210.99
Commercial Letters of Credit		2,373,206,181.44
Trade Related Guarantees		291,736,032.95
Sport Foreign Exchange Contracts		(360,405,406.00)
Trust Department Accounts:		
Trust and Agency Accounts		28,708,043,399.43
Unit Investment Trust Fund (UITF)		16,671,252,900.56
Others		13,105,102,134.31
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	61,447,059,361.25

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Compliance with Magna Carta - 6% for Small Enterprise	
a) 6% Small Enterprises	27.34%
b) 2% for Medium Enterprises	6.06%
Non-Performing Loans (NPLs)	9,726,867,134.35
Ratio of Non-Performing Loans to Total Loan Portfolio (NPL to TLP)	5.72%
Classified Loans & Other Risk Assets	29,776,572,985.26
General provision for loan losses	1,500,597,721.93
Specific provision for loan losses	13,302,386,107.20
Return on Equity (ROE)	12.45%
DOSRI loans and receivables	27,093,106,816.44
Ratio of DOSRI loans and receivables to TLP	15.94%
Past due DOSRI loans and receivables	286,361,453.58
Capital Adequacy Ratio (Solo Basis)	
a. Tier 1 (Solo Basis)	10.34%
b. Total (Solo Basis)	14.86%

I/We, ANDRES C. SARMIENTO and JOSE C. NOGRALES of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Balance Sheet are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

Sgd. ANDRES C. SARMIENTO
SVP, Controllership Group

Sgd. JOSE C. NOGRALES
OIC/SEVP-Operations &
Corporate Services Sector

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 23rd day of October 2007 in Manila City, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 01578477, issued in Manila City on January 5, 2007 and Residence Certificate No. 08232566 issued in Makati City on July 8, 2007.

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Page No. 41
Book No. II
Series of 2007

AMADO ALEXIS G. CLAROS
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2008
PTR No. 5349382/1-10-07/Manila
IBP No. 699312/1-9-07/Caloocan

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of September 30, 2007

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Items	P	7,346,413,623.40
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		44,011,772,939.30
Due from Other Banks		908,855,641.84
Financial Assets at Fair Value through Profit or Loss		5,398,928,147.18
Available-for-Sale Financial Assets-Net		96,667,776,569.61
Held-to-Maturity (HTM) Financial Assets-Net		16,864,755,398.01
Unquoted Debt Securities Classified as Loans-Net		1,885,126,009.46
Investments in Non-Marketable Equity Security-Net		1,174,124,204.53
Loans and Receivables:		
Interbank Loans Receivable		27,695,970,091.28
Loans and Receivables - Others		104,699,619,073.66
Loans and Receivables Arising from RA/CA/PR/SLB		22,985,413,638.63
Other Financial Assets		4,813,061,441.92
Equity Investments in Subsidiaries, Associates and Joint Ventures-Net		1,016,710,970.04
Bank Premises, Furniture,Fixtures & Equipment-Net		4,637,134,724.51
Real and Other Properties Acquired-Net		9,894,913,903.42
Other Assets-Net		21,510,187,657.18
TOTAL ASSETS	P	371,510,764,033.97

LIABILITIES

Deposit Liabilities	P	279,361,842,023.46
Due to Other Banks		12,038,142.11
Bills Payable		
BSP (Rediscounting and Other Advances)		437,138,155.64
Others		30,575,196,037.29
Unsecured Subordinated Debt-Net		6,756,000,000.00
Due to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		96,674,178.65
Other Financial Liabilities		2,253,709,385.17
Other Liabilities		17,055,219,438.06
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	336,547,817,370.38

STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY

Capital Stock	P	11,971,000,000.00
Other Capital Accounts		12,194,494,703.38
Retained Earnings		10,797,451,960.21
TOTAL STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY		34,962,946,663.59
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	P	371,510,764,033.97

CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS

Guarantees Issued	P	237,584,058.32
Financial Standby Letters of Credit		311,968,849.25
Performance Standby Letters of Credit		108,571,210.99
Commercial Letters of Credit		2,373,206,181.44
Trade Related Guarantees		291,736,032.95
Sport Foreign Exchange Contracts		(360,405,406.00)
Trust Department Accounts:		
Trust and Agency Accounts		28,708,043,399.43
Unit Investment Trust Fund (UITF)		16,671,252,900.56
Others		13,105,102,134.31
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	61,447,059,361.25

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries
    1. LBP Leasing Corporation
    2. LBP Financial Services, SPA
    3. LBP Remittance Co., USA

2. Capital Adequacy Ratio (Consolidated Basis)	
a. Tier 1 (Consolidated Basis)	10.54%
b. Total (Consolidated Basis)	15.24%

I/We, ANDRES C. SARMIENTO and JOSE C. NOGRALES of the above mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Consolidated Balance Sheet are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief

Sgd. ANDRES C. SARMIENTO
SVP, Controllership Group

Sgd. JOSE C. NOGRALES
OIC/SEVP-Operations &
Corporate Services Sector

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 23rd day of October 2007 in Manila City, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 01578477 issued in Manila City on January 5, 2007 and Residence Certificate No. 06232566 issued in Makati City on July 8, 2007.

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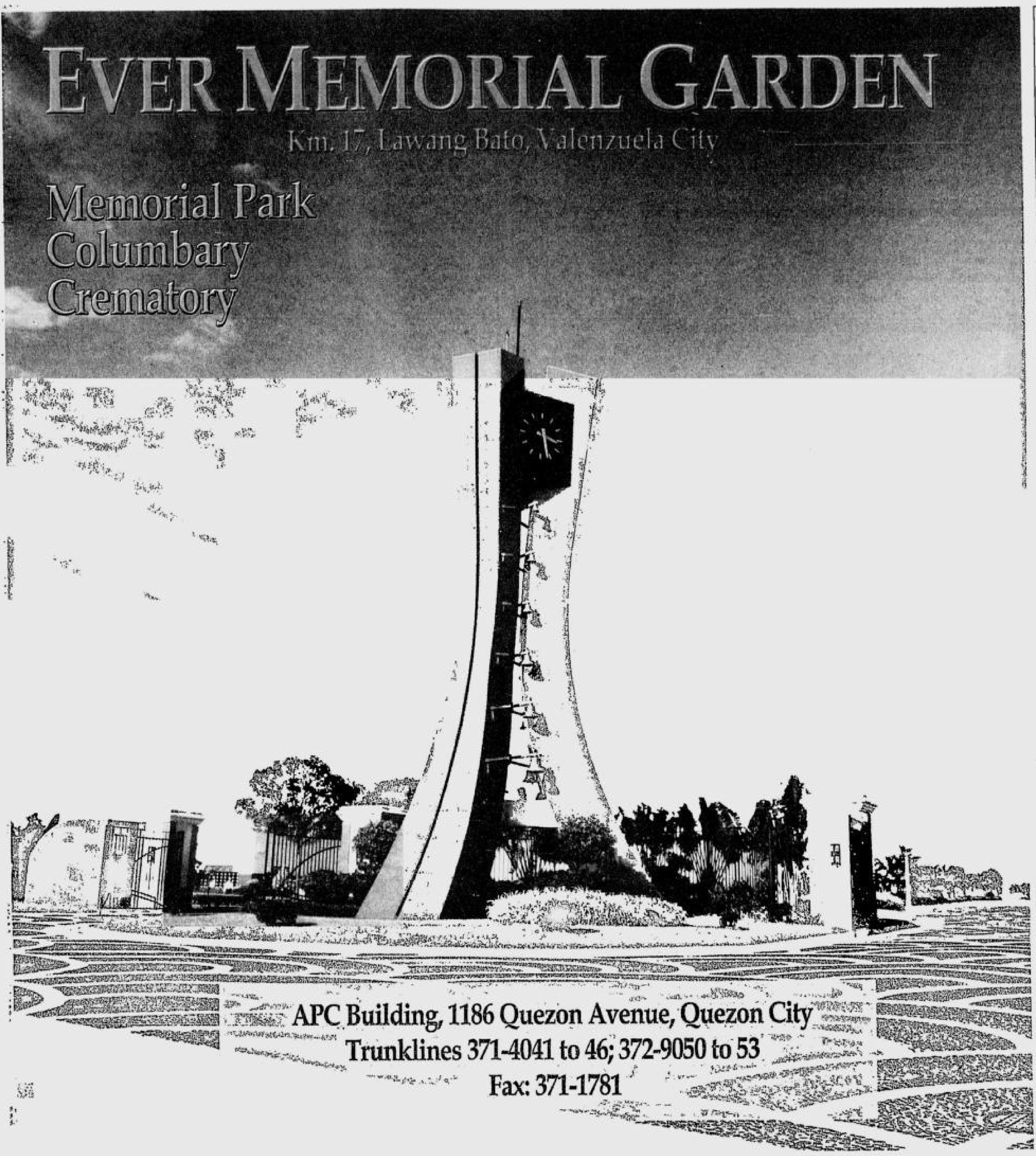
Page No. 41
Book No. II
Series of 2007

AMADO ALEXIS G. CLAROS
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2008
PTR No. 5349382/1-10-07/Manila
IBP No. 699312/1-9-07/Caloocan

HEAD OFFICE
1598 M. H. del Pilar cor. Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Telephone Numbers: 552-0000; 551-2200; 450-7001
Phone Access Numbers: 405-7000 or 1-800-10-405-7000 (Toll Free)

www.landbank.com

MEMBER : Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (Deposits insured up to P250,000.00)


EVER MEMORIAL GARDEN
Km. 17, Lawang Bato, Valenzuela City
Memorial Park
Columbary
Crematory
APC Building, 1186 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City
Trunklines 371-4041 to 46; 372-9050 to 53
Fax: 371-1781

"I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on the rock and gave me a firm place to stand."
Psalm 40:1-2

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die." **John 11:25-26**

JOSE JIMENEZ LADABAN

passed away on October 25, 2007
at the age of 75.

His loving wife **Nelia**; children **Jonel** & **Reg**, **Jojo** & **Grace**, **Jonathan** & **Rizza** and **James** & **Gina**; his grandchildren **JR** & **Anjo**, **Jeb** & **Bea**, **Jacob** & **Jianna** and **Gianine** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Sta. Maria Della Strada Church, Katipunan Ave., La Vista, Quezon City.

Interment will be on October 28, 2007 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

Notify family and friends of a loved one who had just passed away.

We accept death notices, announcing details of the person's wake and interment. For a very affordable fee you can reach out to everyone who have been a part of the life of your dearly departed.
For more information, you may contact
Inquirer Classifieds at (02)897 8425.

MRS. SOLEDAD DE GUIA PEÑALOSA

(Retired Private Schools Area Supervisor)

July 26, 1918 – October 25, 2007

Peacefully joined our Creator at the age of 89.

Her loving children: **Alex**, **Nel** and **June**; in-laws, **Allen**, **Bee**, **Louie** and **Susan**; grandchildren, **Xandee**, **Aldrin**, **Anaboy**, **Pam**, **Leska**, **Nelliza**, **Jane**, **Eddie**, **Jayson**, **Lance** **Krystal** and great-grandchildren request for prayers for her eternal repose.

Her remains lie in state at La Bien Memorial Chapels, 9003 Gen. Evangelista St., Maliksi, Bacoor, Cavite.

Interment will be at Bacoor Memorial Garden on Sunday, October 28, 2007 after the 3:00pm Mass at St. Michael's Catholic Church.

In Loving Memory of
JOSE MA. BERNARTE y BUSTOS
6th Death Anniversary
(August 28, 1929 - October 26, 2001)
and
LULU BERNARTE y DAVID
1st Death Anniversary
(July 14, 1933 – October 29, 2006)
of Lubao, Pampanga
In joyful remembrance of lives well-lived,
Eucharistic Celebrations will be offered in the following parishes:
October 26 & October 29, 2007

St. Augustine Parish, Lubao, Pampanga	6:15 a.m.
Sta. Rita de Casia Parish, Sta. Rita, Pampanga	5:30 a.m.
Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Dolores, City of San Fernando, Pampanga	6:00 a.m.
San Agustin Parish, San Agustin, City of San Fernando, Pampanga	6:30 a.m.
Holy Rosary Parish, Angeles City	4:30 p.m. & 5:30 p.m.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4

Message of Thanks
The Family of the late
ILUMINADA NARCISO SANTIAGO
at the age of (87)
Who passed away peacefully on Sept. 16, 2007 at Asian Hospital.
Wishes to express thanks to all who offered prayers, masses and flowers.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

For your Classified Ads requirements, call our Classifieds Advertising Hotlines:

HEAD OFFICE
897-8808 loc. 514, 516;
899-4425; 897-2535; 897-8425
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892-5578; 811-4361; 811-4370
KALAW
523-5570 Loc. 115 or 116;
528-0213
MEGAMALL
635-0219; 635-0220

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate;
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
East Avenue, Quezon City
E-mail Address: ltombox@lto.gov.ph • Website: lto.gov.ph

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. RIB-2007-891
11 October 2007

TO : All Regional Directors, Assistant Regional Directors, District Office Heads, MV Inspectors and Concerned Employees

SUBJECT : Implementing Rules and Regulations in the Inspection and Registration of Auto-LPG Motor Vehicles

Pursuant to the provisions of the following laws, rules, and regulations specifically:

- Section 4 (d) par. 1 of the Republic Act 4136 otherwise known as the Land Transportation and Traffic Code;
- Section 1 of B.P. Blg. 74 amending certain provisions of R.A. 4136;
- Republic Act 8749 or "The Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999" and its implementing rules, regulations, guidelines namely:
  - ➢ DOTC – DO No. 2007-06
  - ➢ DENR DAO No. 51
  - ➢ DENR DAO No. 2000-81
  - ➢ DENR DAO No. 2007-27
- DTI DAO No. 01: 1997 "Revised Rules and Regulation Concerning the Philippine Standard (PS) Quality and/or Safety Certification Mark Scheme;" and
- DTI-BPS PNS 05 or the Standard Code of Practice for the use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) on internal combustion engine

The following implementing rules and regulations in the inspection and registration of auto-LPG motor vehicles are hereby promulgated.

A. Coverage

These implementing rules and regulations shall cover all motor vehicles that are fueled solely or alternately by Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) or auto-LPG.

B. Installation

The device for the use of LPG as fuel by any motor vehicle shall be installed only by the conversion/installing shop duly certified by the Bureau of Product and Standards (BPS) of the DTI under its Philippine Standards Certification Mark (PS Mark) scheme. The shop shall install the device in accordance with the specifications provided for under the Standard Code of Practice for the use of LPG (PNS 05:1983) and its future revisions and amendments.

The converted vehicle shall be subjected to an annual maintenance and inspection by the BPS certified conversion/installing shop. The BPS certified conversion/installing shop shall issue a corresponding Certificate of Inspection and Maintenance Compliance (CIMC).

Any auto-LPG fuel device installed in the motor vehicle shall be guaranteed by the conversion shop and shall be stipulated in the Certificate of Conversion/Installation against faulty defects. Any accident that may arise as a result of the conversion/installation defects shall be the accountability of the conversion/installing shop.

C. Inspection of auto-LPG

1. The motor vehicle inspector, among others, shall see to it that:
   - ■ the fill valve is located outside the vehicle compartment and isolated from the auto-LPG container;
   - ■ an appropriate sticker marked "LPG" is posted on the fill valve cover, for each unit installed, and on the upper-left corner of the vehicle's windshield. The sticker posted on the windshield, aside from the "LPG" marking, should also bear a warning message that says "not allowed to park on an enclosed parking space"; and
   - ■ the conversion shop concerned had officially affixed the PS MARK as per the implementing guidelines of PNS 05:1983 and its future revisions and amendments.
2. The motor vehicle inspector shall require from the auto-LPG motor vehicle registrant (for the first year only) the certified true copy of the Certificate of Conversion/Installation issued by the BPS certified conversion/installing shop.
3. The motor vehicle inspector shall require from the auto-LPG motor vehicle registrant (owner) the certified true copy of a Certificate of Inspection and Maintenance Compliance issued by a BPS certified conversion/installing shop.
4. The auto-LPG motor vehicle should pass the emission standards pursuant to DENR Administrative Order No. 51, as follows:

Vehicle Category for Spark Ignition Engine	CO (% by volume)	HC (PPM as Hexane)
Registered for the first time on or before 31 December 2002 at idle	4.5	800
Registered for the first time on or after 01 January 2003	3.5	600

For compression ignition engine, the opacity (naturally aspirated and turbo charged) measured as light absorption coefficient shall not be more than 2.51/m.

The test procedure for the measurement of exhaust emission for the in-use motor vehicles with spark ignition and compression ignition engine are described in annexes B and C of DENR DAO 2000-81.

D. Registration of auto-LPG

1. No auto-LPG motor vehicle shall be accepted for registration if the conversion center that issued the Certification of Conversion/Installation or the Certificate of Inspection and Maintenance Compliance is not included in the list of certified conversion shops provided by the DTI-BPS;
2. An auto-LPG motor vehicle when presented for registration shall, in addition to the Land Transportation Office (LTO) requirements, present the following documents:
   a. For the first year only, Certificate of Conversion/Installation issued by the PS certified LPG conversion/installation. Said certificate shall include the following information:
      - ■ Name of LPG Conversion/Installation Shop
      - ■ Control number of the Certificate
      - ■ Date issued (actual date of vehicle conversion)
      - ■ Name of the owner of the converted vehicle
      - ■ Description of the converted vehicle (make, model, plate number)
      - ■ Standard warranty statement against faulty defects for a period of one (1) year from the date of conversion/installation
      - ■ Signature of the duly authorized personnel of the LPG conversion/installation shop

   b. For subsequent years, current Certificate of Inspection and Maintenance Compliance issued by the PS certified conversion/installation shop. Said certificate shall include the following information:
      - Name of LPG Conversion/Installation Shop
      - Control number of the Certificate
      - Date issued (actual date of vehicle inspection)
      - Name of the owner of the converted vehicle
      - Description of the vehicle (make, model, plate number)
      - Signature of the duly authorized personnel of the LPG Conversion/Installation shop
3. The registration fees of an auto-LPG motor vehicle shall be pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 8794 also known as the "Motor Vehicle User's Charge (MVUC) Law."

This implementing rules and regulations shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

All rules or regulations that are inconsistent herewith are hereby deemed superseded.

For strict compliance.

(Sgd.) **REYNALDO I. BERROYA**
Assistant Secretary

(PDI-October 26, 2007)

More Classified Ads

Office of the Ombudsman .... Page **A10**
Pag-Ibig HDMF .... Page **A11**
Social Security System .... Page **A19**
Philippine Navy .... Page **B4**

NREA sets 'Thank-U-day' dinner, Nov. 7

THE NATIONAL REAL ESTATE Association (NREA) will tender an appreciation dinner on Nov. 7, 2007, 7 pm, at the Zobel Hall of Makati Sports Club, L. P. Leviste Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City.

Guest Speaker is KAMPI stalwart, Rep. Jose G. Solis, past NREA president, who will give an update on latest developments. This was announced by Trustee Jose Angelico J. Angeles of Asian Land Strategies Corp. and chairman of the NREA appreciation event.

Mr. Alejandro S. Mañalac, NREA national president, said that this is for NREA partners and stakeholders in appreciation of their participation and support for the successful holding of the recent 12th NREA-HUDCC National Convention and Trade Exhibits at Makati Sports Club, Makati City.

New members will also be inducted during the affair.

Trustee Edwin L. Lisondra, NREA's OIC overall convention chairman, expressed especial gratitude to Vice Pres. Noli de Castro, for serving as special guest and keynote speaker.

Vice Pres. de Castro is also concurrent chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, which co-sponsored the NREA confab.

Assisting in the preparations are members Jesse Rebustillo, Nomer Macalalad, Audrey Rose Aborde, Malou Villados and Sonia Ama.

Guests may coordinate their attendance at the NREA dinner through tel. nos. 9123492, or 9134463.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project Brief Description	One (1) lot Supply, delivery, installation, configuration, commissioning and implementation of File Server Storage Upgrade and Back-up System per BSP Terms of Reference.
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	P 3,806,192.00
Contract Duration	Within sixty (60) calendar days after receipt of the approved contract.

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project awarded and completed from Y2002 to present amounting to at least 50% of the ABC. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting 30 October 2007 (not later than 1:30 p.m.)
2. Pre-bid Conference	22 November 2007, 2:00 P.M.
3. Opening of Bids	11 December 2007, 2:00 P.M.
4. Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,905.00

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

(PDI – October 26, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Science and Technology
FOREST PRODUCTS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
College, Laguna

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The FOREST PRODUCTS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE (FPRDI) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites Suppliers/Manufacturers/Distributors and Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of the following Laboratory Equipment/Facilities:

ITEMS	APPROVED BUDGET
1 Unit Sound Reflection/Absorption Testing Chamber Computer Aided	Php 900,000.00
1 Unit Universal Testing Machine with Computer Interface	Php 3.47 M
1 Unit Automatic Digital Elmendorf Tear Tester	Php 1.03 M
1 Lot Repair of Furniture Testing Lab	Php 150,000.00
1 Lot Repair of Beater/Deinking Lab	Php 150,000.00
1 Lot Repair of Pulping & Bleaching Lab	Php 250,000.00

Location	–	Los Baños, Laguna
Total Contract Budget	–	Php 5.95 M
Contract Duration	–	30 to 75 days
Delivery Period	–	December 28, 2007

Bid documents will be available to prospective bidders on Oct. 22-31, 2007 at the Office of the BAC Secretariat, FPRDI, College, Laguna, upon payment of a non-refundable fee to the FPRDI Cashier.

The FPRDI assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) WILFREDO M. AMERICA
BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI–Oct. 19 & 26, 2007)

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MARINDUQUE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
(MARELCO)
Ihatub, Boac, Marinduque

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY & TO BID

The Marinduque Electric Cooperative, Inc. (MARELCO) through its Pre-Bid and Awards Committee (PBAC) hereby invites all interested suppliers for public bidding for the supply and delivery of electrical materials and equipment for the Line Rehabilitation, System Improvement and upgrading.

Schedule I	Poles & Crossarms (assorted sizes)
Schedule II	Transformers
Schedule III	Cut Outs, Wires and Cables
Schedule IV	Kilowatthour Meters
Schedule V	Pole line hardware, tools and equipment

Approved Budget	P 9.0M
Source of Funds	N.E.A. - CARE Fund

Bidding Requirements:

1. Bidder must be an "Accredited Supplier" of MARELCO
2. Must have attended the Pre-Bid Conference
3. Must have secured Bid Documents upon payment of non-refundable amount of Six Thousand Pesos (P6,000.00)
4. Must have posted 10% Bid Bond in cash or Manager's check.

Schedule of Activities:

1	Pre-Bid Conference	Nov. 5, 2007-9:00 a.m.
2.	Bid-Submission and Opening	Nov. 6, 2007-9:00 a.m.
3.	Submission of recommendation of Award to the General Manager	Nov. 8, 2007

MARELCO reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informalities therein or accept the bid that in its judgment is the most beneficial to the Cooperative.

For more information, please contact the PBAC Chairman, Agnes S. Espino at Telephone No.: (042)332-1043.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO Q. BUENO
General Manager

(PDI - Oct. 24 & 26, 2007)

DCB TRADING INCORPORATED
based in Subic Bay is in urgent need of high caliber individual to join our team.
We are looking for one (1)

Operation Manager

Criteria:
- Graduate of any course
- 3 years or up of related foreign operation
- work experience on automobiles
- fluent in Nihonggo, Sri Lankan and English
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Interested applicants may directly apply and/or submit their applications/resumé to the address indicated below:

DCB TRADING INCORPORATED
Human Resources Department
Lot 2 EMS Area, 14th Gate, Perimeter Rd., Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Zambales
Telefax No.: (047) 252-8040

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Citizenship	Position
EUROCOPTER PHILIPPINES, INC. PADC Hangar, #2 Manila Domestic Airport, Pasay City	John Flaherty British	Chief Operating Officer
CHINS CHOIZ CANTEEN 1774 Adriatico St., Malate, Manila	Young Hee Yoo Korean	Cook
SOFT WHEEDLE TRADING LTD. CO. 101 Masangkay St., Binondo, Manila	Xuefeng Chen Chinese	Secretary
QINGTAN WENCHENG MANUFACTURING CORP. 48 Kalakal St., San Rafael Village, Navotas, Metro Manila	Qiaoqiao Xu Chinese	Secretary
QINGTAN WENCHENG MANUFACTURING CORP. 48 Kalakal St., San Rafael Village, Navotas, Metro Manila	Pengpeng Shi Chinese	Supervisor
HER IDEAS MANUFACTURING CORP. 402 Yague St., Sta. Cruz, Manila	Zhenjia Shi Chinese	Supervisor
NARA 9 NETWORK SYSTEM, INC. 1700 Baclaran, Parañaque City	Xingcong Shi Chinese	Consultant
SKY ENGLISH LEARNING PLUS INC. #24 Panay Ave., Quezon City	Hyeondong Kim Korean	Operations Manager
NARA 9 NETWORK SYSTEM, INC. 1700 Baclaran, Parañaque City	Qichang Wu Chinese	Operation Manager
MANILA PAVILION HOTEL (ACESITE HOTEL CORP.) United Nations Ave., Ermita, Manila	Nurul Huda Bin Mohammed Radzi Malaysian	Executive Sous Chef
SOGY & GROUP TRADING CO. 3380 Ibarra St., Palanan, Makati City	Munish Kumar Indian	Assistant Manager
PACIFIC CONSULTANTS INTERNATIONAL ASIA, INC. 14th Flr. 88 Corporate Center #141 Valero Street Salcedo Village, Makati City	Tsuneo Sakano Japanese	President
HARI RAM ATTHI TRADING CORP. 41 Ilaya St., Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Paul Joginder Indian	Finance Manager
HER IDEAS MANUFACTURING CORP. 402 Yague St., Sta. Cruz, Manila	Haiyan Wang Chinese	Secretary
HARJASGUR LENDING & TRADING CORP. 1017 Panay St., Brgy. 556 Zone 055, Sampaloc, Manila	Simarjeet Kaur Indian	Marketing Manager
LAKSH LENDING & TRADING CORP. 14, Main Drive, Mintcor Townhouse, Muntinlupa City	Mandeep Kaur Indian	Sales Manager
CEBU NUMBER ONE TRAVEL CORP. 3/F F.B. Harrison Mansion, F. B. Harrison St., Pasay City	Dae Jin Kang Korean	Operations Manager
MAERSK GLOBAL SERVICE CENTRES (PHILIPPINES) LTD. 17/F Wynsum Corporate Plaza, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Clayton Learin D'Souza Indian	Lead Area Account Manager (Documentation)
PHILIPPINE HOTELIERS, INC. Dusit Hotel Nikko, Ayala Center, 1223 Makati City	Nisakorn Triwanit Thai	Guest Relations Manager
AMAZING PHIL. THEATRE, INC. Film Center Building, CCP Complex, Pasay City	Kyounghun Lee Korean	PR Consultant

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

for RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC Regional Director

(PDI – October 26, 2007)

Contract Manager

The US Naval Facilities Engineering command is seeking qualified applicants for the position of service contract project manager at WESMINCOM Zamboanga City, Mindanao. Contract currently encompasses aviation and waterfront operations, dining facility operation, MWR, facilities support. Employment will initially be via annual renewable contract. Qualified applicants will be required to have appropriate clearances and will preferably have had prior military experience. Submit resumé, compensation requirements, and inquiries to: HRO@navfacpacific.us.

Quality Assurance Representative

The US Naval Facilities Engineering command is seeking qualified applicants for the position of quality assurance representative at WESMINCOM Zamboanga City, Mindanao. The position will provide quality assurance for service contracts and construction contracts. Employment will initially be via annual renewable contract. Qualified applicants will be required to have a minimum of a BS in an appropriate engineering curriculum from an accredited university. Submit resumé, compensation requirements, and inquiries to: HRO@navfacpacific.us.

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS

ANNOUNCEMENT

Campaigning ENDS Saturday, October 27, 2007

This is to inform the public that the official campaign period for the **October 29, 2007 Barangay** and **Sangguniang Kabataan** elections will end on ***midnight*** of **October 27, 2007, Saturday** This is in keeping with COMELEC Resolution 8264 which outlined the calendar of activities and certain prohibited acts in connection with the Brangay and SK polls.

A public service reminder from the
Education and Information Department
525-9294 * 525-9301 * 527-0821 * 527-5574
www.comelec.gov.ph * comelec.wordpress.com * www.bagongbotante.com
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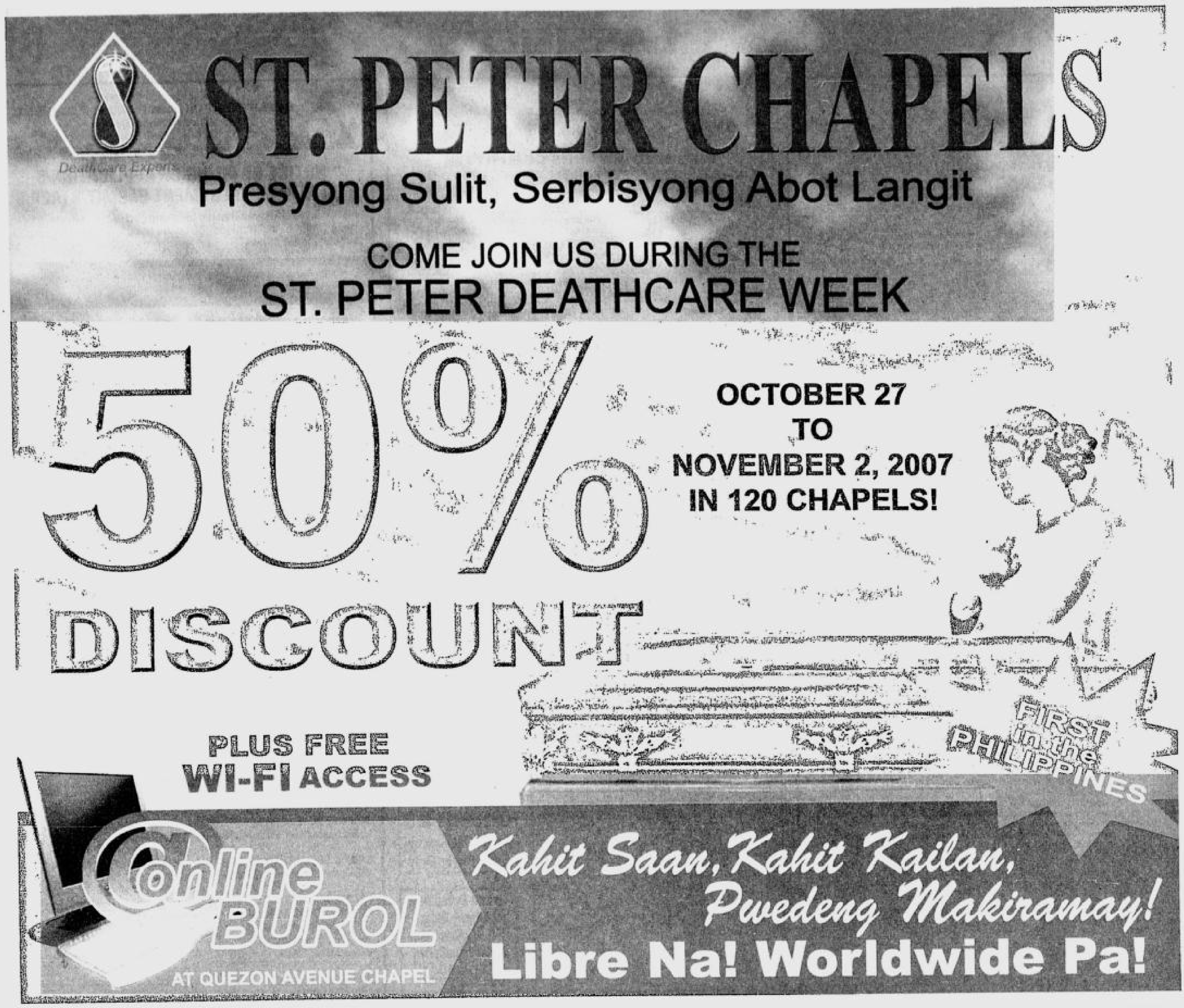

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St. Mother Theresa

JUSTINA "NENA" CASTILLO LOPEZ

peacefully joined our Lord and her husband **Luci**
on **October 25, 2007** at the age of **88.**

Her children, **Danny** (†) & **Rose, Obet, Vickie** & **Nardo** (†), **Dinan** & **Cheryl,**
Linda & **Boy, Tony** & **Nine**

Grandchildren: **Melissa** & **Benjie, Mikey** & **Aiza, Raffy** & **Jennifer, Gabby,**
Javi, John & **Roch, Jojo** & **Marsh, Tin, Guita, Shelley, Paolo, Tricé,**
Franco, Carlo, Jaq, Ramon

Great-grandchildren: **Beata, Andrea, Anton, Alfonso, Dani, Marcus, Tiffany, Leonard**

Sister: **Aurora**

Sisters-in-law: **Aurelia, Anatalia**

Her remains lie in state at **Chapel C, Christ the King,** Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

Funeral Mass on **October 28, 2007 (Sunday)** at **12:30 p.m.**

Cremation will follow at 3:00 p.m. at **Loyola Memorial Park Crematory, Marikina City.**

IN THIS ISSUE
'Why do product testing when it can't predict likely sales?' /B2-4

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino
BUSINESS Friday
E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/business

Chowking goes places

Food firm expands to UAE, Indonesia, US

Text and Photos by Tina Arceo-Dumlao

CHOWKING crew strikes a pose outside the Abu Dhabi branch

JAKARTA—AFTER 373 branches, Chowking is finding the Philippines a little too cramped for comfort.

Even as the country's leading quick service Chinese food chain continues to expand its local network by around 30 stores a year, it knew as early as 2003 that it was quickly reaching saturation point.

This forced Chowking to look outside the Philippines' borders to ensure its continued growth, and it found new homes in Indonesia, the United Arab Emirates and the United States.

Today, Chowking has five branches in Indonesia and seven in the United Arab Emirates—four in Dubai and one each in Sharjah, Ajman and the capital Abu Dhabi.

Chowking also has 12 outlets in the United States—11 in California and one in Las Vegas, Nevada.

But it took a lot of soul searching and frequent visits to the drawing board before Chowking felt truly welcome in these countries.

Eduardo Paredes Jr., who heads Chowking's international operations, told the Inquir-

CHOWKING/ B2-2

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Member of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation. Maximum Insurance For Each Depositor P250,000.

Chowking goes places

From page B2-1

Local Chinese quick service chain extends appeal to other nationalities

er that in Indonesia, for instance, Chowking saw its sales slowly slip away in early 2006 when the novelty of having a new brand like Chowking wore off in Jakarta after about 10 months of operation.

When Chowking took a long, hard look at its operations, it realized that while it was in Indonesia, it was not doing what the Indonesians do.

Turnaround plan

A turnaround plan was called for and Paredes said this entailed truly understanding the Indonesian market and taste because simply transporting the Philippine menu and way of doing things was clearly not working.

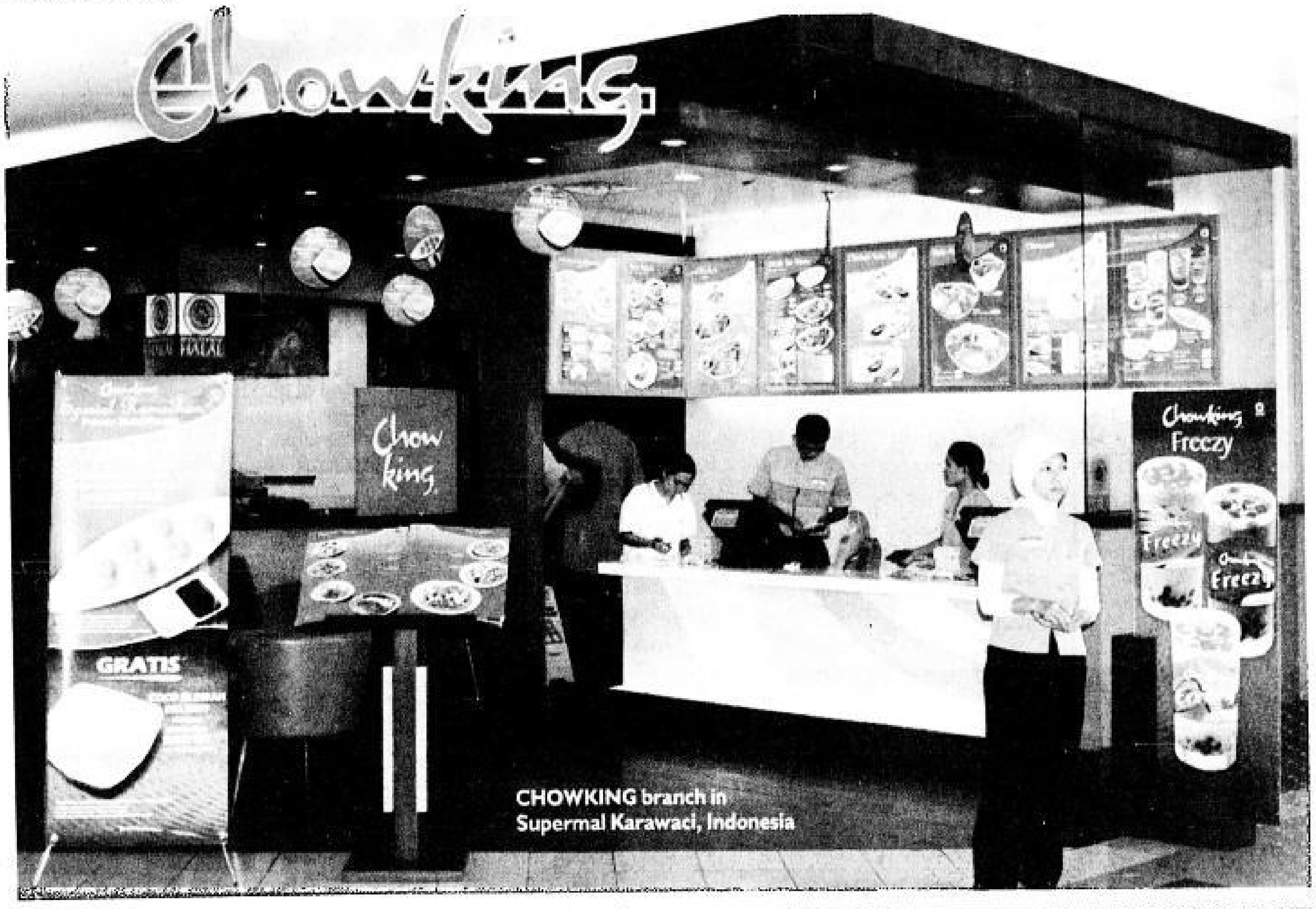
"One of the first things we did was to hire a local chef for us to really understand the Indonesian taste. That really opened our eyes," Paredes said.

The differences between the Filipino and Indonesian tastes and preferences were many.

Indonesians love their sambal sauce on their chicken, not the gravy that Filipinos prefer. They do not like fish sauce (patis) or vinegar and have a higher tolerance for spicy food than Filipinos.

They also want two distinct tastes in their food—like sweet and sour or salty and peppery.

AHMED and Thasneem Lafir



CHOWKING branch in Supermal Karawaci, Indonesia

AN EMPLOYEE prepares chicken siomai

Different tastes

Chowking in Indonesia thus put in place a product board, composed mostly of locals, to test menu offerings before they are introduced in the outlets, just to make sure that the taste will appeal to Indonesians, though not necessarily Filipinos.

This has led to the introduction of Chowking dishes sold solely in Indonesia, like the best-selling Chicken Char Shiu (asado chicken), sweet bakpao (siopao filled with ube or lotus) and fish fillet with tausi.

Chowking also realized that the Indonesians do not like different kinds of food together in one plate, unlike Filipinos who are fine with having noodles, rice, two types of viand and even dessert in one plate as in the Chowking lauriat.

Even the menu boards were changed because Indonesians were not familiar with terms such as chow mien to refer to the noodles, so the menu simply states noodles with chicken or beef with noodles.

And of course the English menu must be translated into Bahasa.

The store design was modified as well to cater to the Indonesians' preference for more subdued lighting and more comfortable seating.

Paredes explained that in Indonesia, Chowking is positioned more as a casual dining place, instead of a fast food outlet like in the Philippines.

The changes came fast and furious, and they paid off as evidenced by the spike in sales.

Paredes said that six months after the modifications were made, sales of the three outlets grew by as much as 20-30 percent; which encouraged Chowking to expand the network by two more this year to bring the network to five, with one more to be put up possibly by the end of the year.

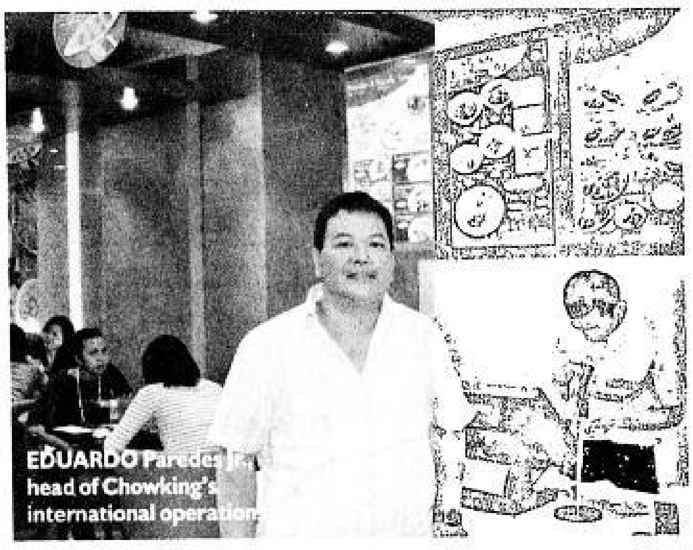
"The confidence is there that we are now able to connect and understand our customers better," Paredes said, noting that four of five customers who come through Chowking's stores in Indonesia are locals—not Filipinos—most of whom are students and professionals.

Filipino community

The opposite is true in the United Arab Emirates, where nine of 10 Chowking customers are Filipinos owing to the huge Filipino expatriate community in the UAE, particularly in Dubai.

But even then, sweeping changes also had to be implemented.

Like in Indonesia, the four-year-old Chowking chain in the UAE is more of a casual dining restaurant chain, which explains why there are waiters who go around taking orders while guests choose from a menu. No menu boards here.


EDUARDO Paredes Jr., head of Chowking's international operations

Filipinos come in groups, especially during the weekends here (which are Friday and Saturday), to catch up with each other or to celebrate special occasions, like christenings, birthdays and even wedding receptions.

This explains why a number of the Chowking restaurants in UAE have function rooms, unlike in the Philippines.

Bunny Malik, business manager of the Chowking Orient Restaurant chain in the UAE, explained in an interview in Dubai that because Filipinos in the UAE long for a taste of home, the Chowking menu in the UAE is quite different.

Filipino favorites

Aside from the traditional Chowking offerings of rice meals and noodle dishes, Chowking in the UAE also sells Filipino favorites such as kare-kare, sweet and sour fish, bulalo, daing na bangus and pinakbet.

These signature Filipino dishes account for 30 percent of Chowking UAE's sales, and even non-Filipinos—mainly Indians and some Arabs—are developing a taste for them.

"What we offer are neat and clean restaurants for Filipinos to come together and feel at home," Malik said. "Chowking has become a home away from home for many Filipinos here."

Ahmed Lafir, managing director of Tradeline LLC, which owns the Chowking franchise in the UAE, said growth has been encouraging, and plans are in place to expand to at least 10 stores by next year.

To think that in 2003, when Tradeline got the Chowking franchise from another firm, Lafir was worried about the prospects of putting up a second store.

Help from head office

Today, he has seven with two more under construction, thanks in part to the continued growth in the UAE economy.

"We really got a lot of help from Chowking in Manila. They really helped us with the operations, especially the commissary," Lafir said.

Filipinos currently head the operation of the commissary in Dubai of about 10,000 square feet that can support up to 10 stores.

But next year, Chowking in the UAE will move to another area four times bigger than the current commissary, which can support as many as 30 stores, not just in the UAE but also in neighboring countries with big Filipino communities like Qatar and Bahrain.

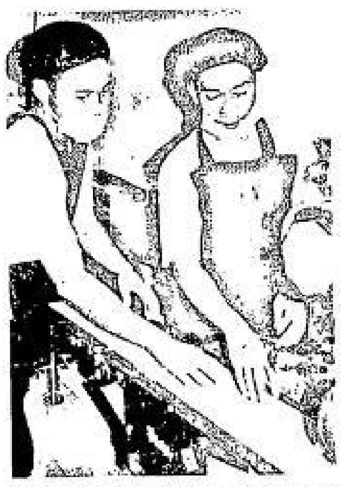
Lafir said Chowking would expand as fast as it can find suitable places, closer to the Filipino communities.

He, however, said that changes continue to be implemented to also reach out to the other nationalities.

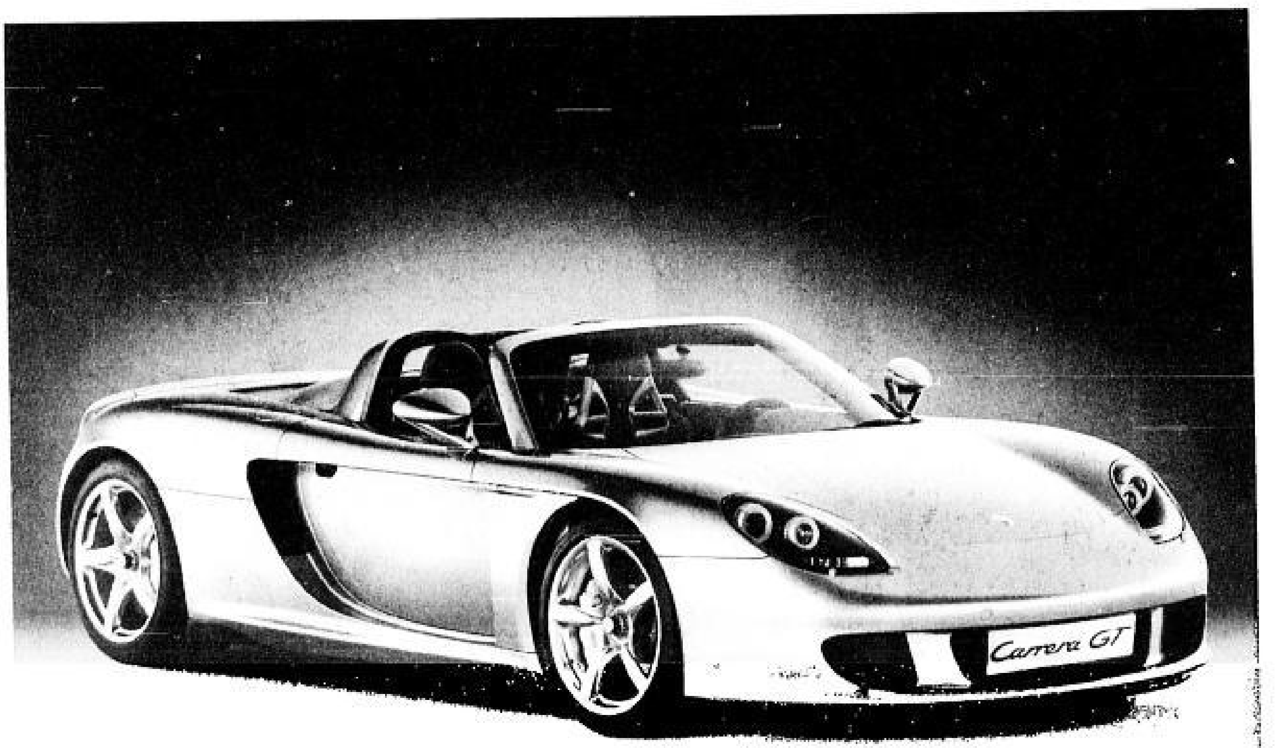
"We will also want to tap non-Filipino clients. It is not good to rely on just one nationality, although Filipinos will remain the heart and soul of Chowking," Lafir said.

Chowking president Rafael dela Rosa told the INQUIRER that at the rate Chowking is expanding, it is possible that international operations will eventually account for half of its total sales due to the presence of Filipinos abroad.

And where Filipinos go, Chowking will be sure to follow.


INDONESIANS at the commissary

YOUNG CHINESE-INDONESIANS hang out at Chowking



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Fuji sees 40% growth in services

FOLLOWING THE GLOBAL TREND IN BUSINESS outsourcing, the print industry is seeing a rapid growth in its services business.

Venturing further into services is essential because of the rising need of customers to effectively handle their documents and office machines.

According to Romerico S. Serrano, president of print industry leader Fuji Xerox Philippines, Inc., the services business has now become the company's fastest growing business segment at a rate of 40 percent a year.

This covers custom designed software solutions for clients to handle high volume printing and document management services like archiving.

With this emerging trend, Serrano said Fuji Xerox had already made services part of its mid- and long-term strategy.

"The move to go into services is mainly driven by the need of the market for an effective and productive way to manage enterprise documents and devices," he explained.

Fuji Xerox Philippines maintains the largest service network in the industry, its operations divided into four regions—Metro sales operations, Northern Luzon operations, Southern Luzon operations, and Visayas and Mindanao operations. Moreover, other groups were created to specifically handle global, Japanese, and national accounts, production and systems marketing and channel business operations.

The company operates 25 branches and depots with full service capabilities to complement its network.

Each of these offices is equipped with necessary resources to operate independently as a branch.

With such a rapid growth, the services item is expected to make a more significant contribution to manufacturers' overall revenues.

Last year, services accounted for 10 percent of Fuji Xerox's revenue, the second largest contributor after copying and printing, which contributed 85 percent.

Taking this trend into consideration, Serrano said that Fuji Xerox is optimistic about reaching its target this year.

"We are looking at double digit growth rates in revenues. From a year-on-year revenue growth point of view, the services business will grow the fastest. But production business (high volume printing and production color) will likewise significantly contribute. Profit-wise, the main contributor will be the Office Product Business mainly due to its strong revenue contribution to total business," he said.

Serrano also attributed the company's growth to structural and strategic changes it has implemented for the past five years. "We have re-engineered our business model, refocused the business in certain strategic directions geographically, and improved the skills and competencies of the workforce," he explained.

With Fuji Xerox taking the lead in providing efficient services, organizations in the Philippines can definitely maximize the benefits they will get from the most advanced office equipment, multifunction devices, publishing systems and document management solutions.

MWCI gets IFC award

MANILA WATER RECENTLY received the International Finance Corporation's Client Leadership Award in recognition of the company's approach to promoting sustainable development in the East Zone of Metro Manila and in the water and wastewater industry.

Manila Water is the first Philippine company to receive this global award, which is given annually.

The Client Leadership Award is a significant award as it recognizes highly successful corporate clients that significantly help IFC's sustainability mission.

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, fosters sustainable economic growth in developing countries by financing private sector investment, mobilizing private capital in local and international financial markets, and providing advisory and risk mitigation services to businesses and governments.

IFC's vision is that poor people have the opportunity to escape poverty and improve their lives.

In fiscal year 2007, IFC committed $8.2 billion and mobilized an additional $3.9 billion through loan participation and structured finance for 299 investments in 69 developing countries.

Since 2003, IFC has provided Manila Water with a total of $90 million in loan facilities, and $15 million in pre-IPO equity infusion.

Brentville International: The real deal in living in a world-class community

Every time you pull inside the Brentville community gate after a 10-minute drive from Alabang or 30 minutes from Makati, the ease of living in this world-class community dawns on you.

A community that is situated far enough from the city to escape the pollution and traffic, yet close enough to allow access to tranquil Tagaytay City and the beckoning Batangas beaches, Brentville gives you easy access to all the things you want.

On moments you don't want to go out, staying put within the expansive grounds of Brentville is a great alternative. This 53-hectare flagship project of Filinvest Land has a lot to offer. First rate facilities and amenities are readily available to its local and foreign residents. There are generous tree-lined roads and wide, open spaces. All electrical and telecommunication facilities are carefully laid underground to allow unobstructed view of the streetscapes, the majestic Mt. Makiling and refreshing surroundings.

Right in the middle of the community is the main clubhouse where your family can have any in-door activity you can think of. The Main clubhouse also features a swimming pool, a kiddie pool, rubberized basketball and tennis courts, and a playground and barbecue pit. Cabañas are strategically located in all the residential clusters, enabling residents to enjoy the unique community set-up of Brentville International. Security is likewise considered as topmost priority. The 3-level security check provides residents peace of mind that is truly priceless these days.

Brentville International is home to the Brent International School, ranked as the best international school in the country today. Residents not only have convenient access to world-class education, they have access to the school's olympic-sized pool, fully equipped gym and an all-weather track and field facility.

Best of all, there is a privileged access to The Palms Country Club for owners of Prominence II property, one of the residential clusters that features single detached homes. Expatriate families can enjoy the privileges of owning these units thru Condominium Certificate of Title.

Aside from Prominence II, there's Prominence I, Sunshine Place, Woodmore Spring, West Parc and The Meridien, all of which offer expansive lot cuts and living spaces. Start up families or those who have only a few members can opt for The Arborage, the latest cluster development within Brentville. It offers relatively smaller and affordable residential house and lots, making it easier to maintain without sacrificing comfort and exclusivity.

Undoubtedly, there are other developments that would offer the promise of world class living. But at Brentville, it is not the promise of the future, it is the reality of here and now.

For inquiries, call 856-7788 / 807-5511 or email info@brentville.com or log on to www.brentville.com

Celebrate A Night of Musical Rhapsody on Oct. 27, 2007 at Prominence II Clubhouse

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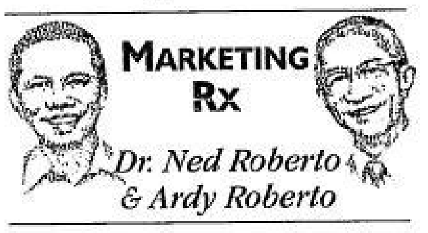
FILINVEST

'Why do product testing when it can't predict likely sales?'



Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

Question: I heard you once say that a certain professor from Wharton School did a research showing that there is a difference between product test results and actual sales performance. How then do we convince top management or the marketing committee to approve a budget for product testing?

ANSWER: There are two parts to your question and the senior MRx-er wants to address each.

First, we confirm the accuracy of your reference to the results of that provocative study of Professor Yoram Wind. Does this mean that the second part of your question logically follows?

Missing premise

Between the first portion and the second, there's a missing unstated premise. It's the purpose of a product test. The assumption is that product testing is for the purpose of testing the new product's capability to predict its entry and first year sales.

You probably implicitly drew this assumption because of the performance metric used, namely, the percentage of the market that intends to purchase the product being tested. Since purchase is the consumer equivalent of what is sales to you, the marketer, it seems logical to talk about the product test's predictive power for sales productivity.

Unfortunately, there was something pivotal missed in this assumption. Look at the metric again. It says: "... intending to purchase." The consumer response measured is clearly NOT "purchase" but "intention."

The consumer behavior reality is that there are many forces that can prevent "intention" from being translated into actual purchase.

For example, between the time the consumer said she "definitely will buy" and the occasion for actually buying, she may not yet have the budget and money to make the purchase. So she decided to postpone and therefore the actual purchase will come much later.

Or, she may decide to buy a competing brand because of the influence of friends and family members. Or the competing brand decided to go into an irresistible promo and so she decided to postpone purchase of your brand. Or her priority needs may have changed over the intervening period. And so on.

All these contribute to why "intention" does not always translate into "action."

This is the consumer end of the exchange. At the marketer end, it's also important to remember that a product test is the test for just one P (i.e., the base P) of the marketing mix. And recall as well that sales is determined not by just one P (even if it's the base P) but by all 4Ps working together.

If you want to test for sales effectiveness, the appropriate testing technique is "market testing" (as termed by Americans) or "test marketing" (as the British are wont to call it); it's not product testing. (Readers who want to learn more about market testing may wish to read the chapter on this topic in the senior MRx-er's 3rd edition book, User-Friendly Marketing Research.)

Do a product test when ...

So you may ask: "What's a product test good for?" Obviously, it's good for some other things. Of course, those other things may or may not be in your priorities for a new product intro.

At the most basic level, those who do a lot of product testing often say to clients: "Your product test can find out at the very least if consumers regard the 'new' in your test product as really new and different."

If this target consumer response and impression is important for you and your new product development people, then do the product test.

At a higher level, you may want to validate your new product's consumer proposition. That may be your chosen focus on one of the product features or attributes of your new product as its consumer purchase motivator. For this purpose, product testing will serve it well.

In fact, product test will serve it better, much better than what some our own clients resort to because "it's cheaper and quicker." This is the practice of adding a piggyback but "hypothetical" question in a UAI survey. Here's a typical formulation of that question: "Suppose a new product is now available that will do this, have that and do this, have that better than competition. How interested will you be in buying this if it's now available?" This is not only cheaper. If it's just one question piggybacking on your regular quarterly or semestral UAI survey, it's free!

But what's truly consequential for you is to find out if your product attribute of "do-this-and-have-that" is the new product's true motivating positioning to its target consumers.

Hypothetical

Time and again, our research experience has shown that in product testing, asking a "hypothetical," suppose-that question can only generate an equivalent "hypothetical" response.

Consumers will be mostly (if not practically all) positive if only to get the interview over with, especially in a time-consuming UAI survey.

When the new product has features that consumers find difficult to visualize, this consumer propensity for "acquiescence" becomes particularly prevalent. So how do you guard against and control this lethal source of test invalidity? The answer is right there in the consumer difficulty.

Make it easy for the consumer to visualize. That means giving them the chance to experience the product. It's the actual using and sensing of the new product that will get the target consumers to appreciate the values (i.e., the values in the product features) the new product contains.

That experience is no other than the consumers actually testing the product. It can't come from asking them to "suppose-that there's a product that can do this, and have that ... "

In summary then, do not spend for a product test if you want to convince top management or your marketing committee about sales effectiveness.

But if you know that your bosses will want to learn how a product is new and distinctive, or if your chosen positioning for the new product converges with the target consumers' positioning of it, then you'll have little difficulty getting your proposed product test approved.

(Keep your questions coming. Send them to us at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net.)

FP
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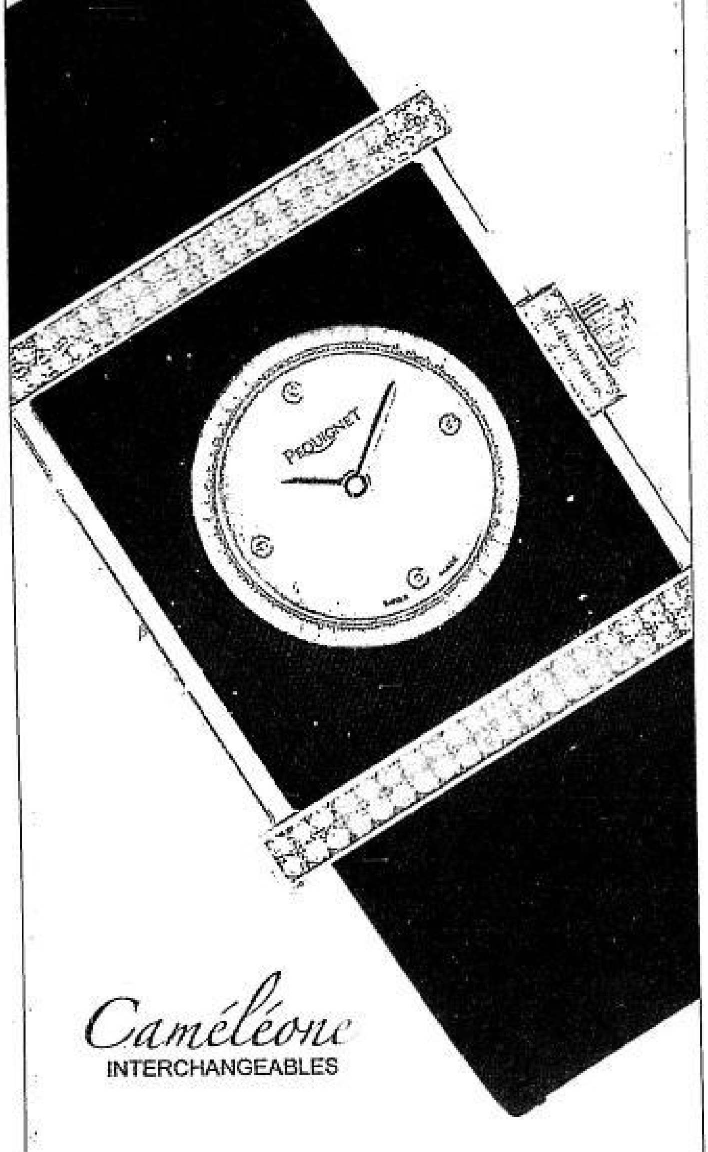
HOR [illegible] CRÉATEUR



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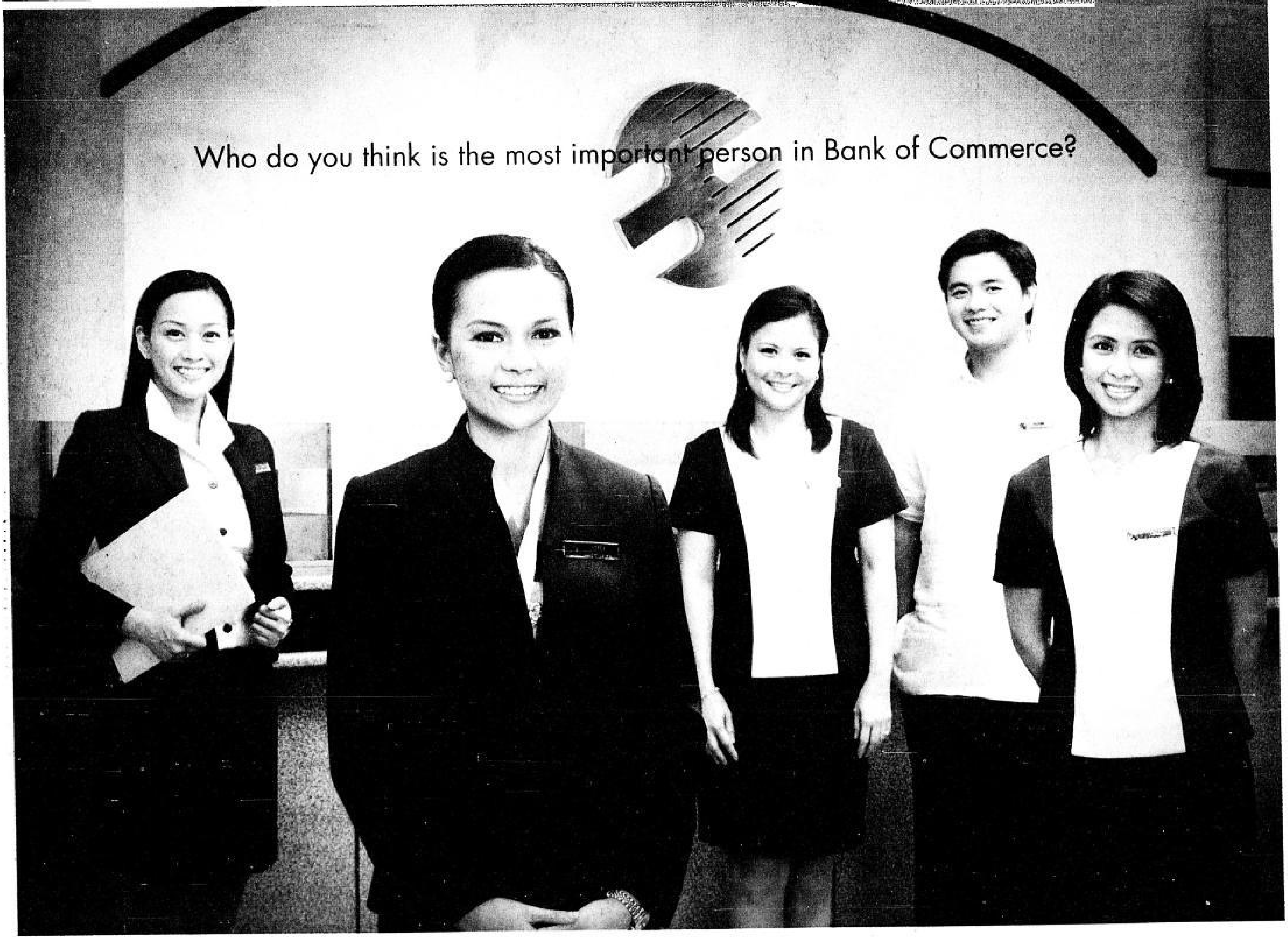
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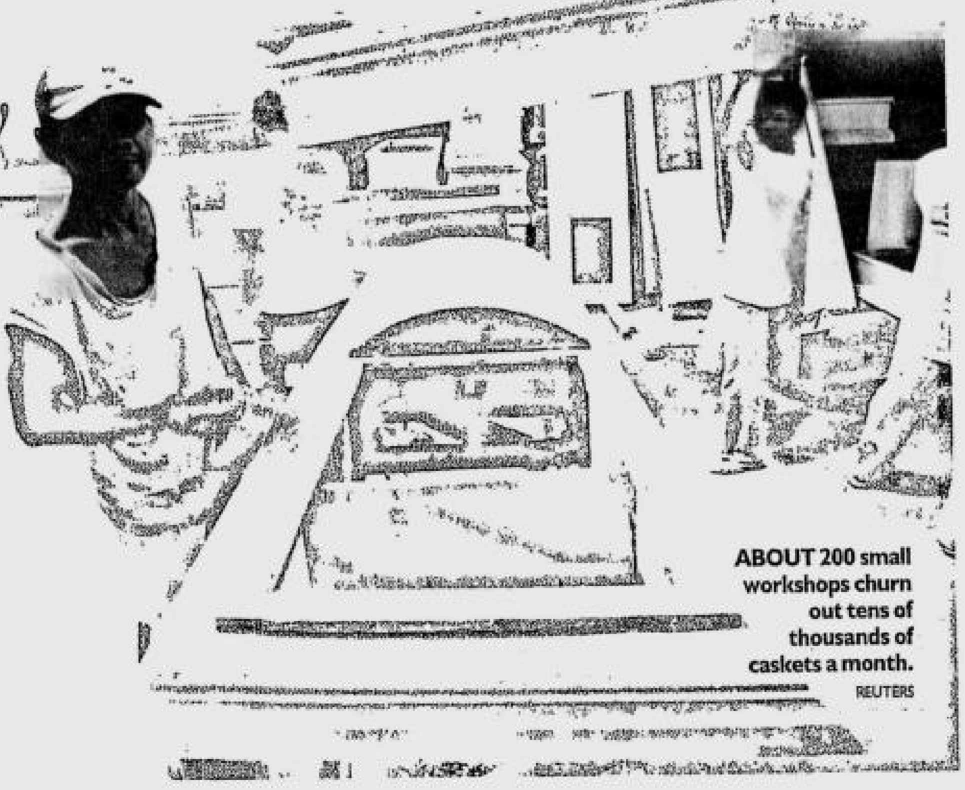
Death industry keeps Pampanga town alive

Municipality booms from business of dying



ABOUT 200 small workshops churn out tens of thousands of caskets a month. REUTERS

SANTO TOMAS—IT COULD BE ANY other sleepy town in the Philippine countryside, rows of single-story houses basking under the sun alongside roads with the occasional car or van driving past.

Until you see the coffins laid out outside many of the homes, many unfinished and in rough wood, but others polished, painted and shining with silver or brass-colored handles.

Santo Tomas, 50 km (30 miles) north of Manila, is the coffin-making capital of the country with about 200 small workshops and backyard family-owned factories churning out tens of thousands of caskets each month.

Before they are finished, many are laid out in the sun to dry after they have been hammered into shaped.

Manufacturing center

Later, they are stacked up on the roadside before being taken away for sale.

Bonifacio Lapid, a 64-year-old, said he started making coffins when he returned to the Philippines in 1989 after years in Guam and Saudi Arabia as an overseas worker.

"I used to run a *sari-sari* (small grocery) store but one day I realized I had only sold one cigarette stick in most of the day," he said. "So I took P20,000 from my savings and started this business."

No one is quite sure why the town took to coffin-making, but the area around Santo Tomas is a center for small-scale manufacturing.

Ceramics and pottery are made here and so also are jeepneys, the iconic Philippine passenger vehicles that are adapted from military jeeps.

Lapid, who worked as a painter and a driver overseas, said he would make coffins and then travel to Manila at least once a week to try and sell them.

It was long, hard work, but he said he was doing well now.

"One of my sons own's a funeral service, another takes about 10-15 coffins in his van to Manila once or twice a week," he said. Lapid's wife, his four sons and their wives all help out.

Lacquer and dogs

A dozen employees work in the sprawling yard beside his home, hewing wood into shape, fitting plywood and hammering nails into the coffins.

Others varnish and polish the caskets, and one man was spray-painting the finished products with lacquer.

Dogs tied up in the yard barked almost constantly while the children of the family played in and around the finished coffins.

There was another coffin-maker next door and another in the house beyond that as well.

"It's not a bad business," said Lapid's wife Concha, asked if she was uncomfortable with the family being linked to dealing with the dead. "We are rendering a service."

Prices begin at around P3,000 ($68) for a simple, white coffin with silver-colored plastic handles and go all the way up to P21,000 for a heavy metal casket.

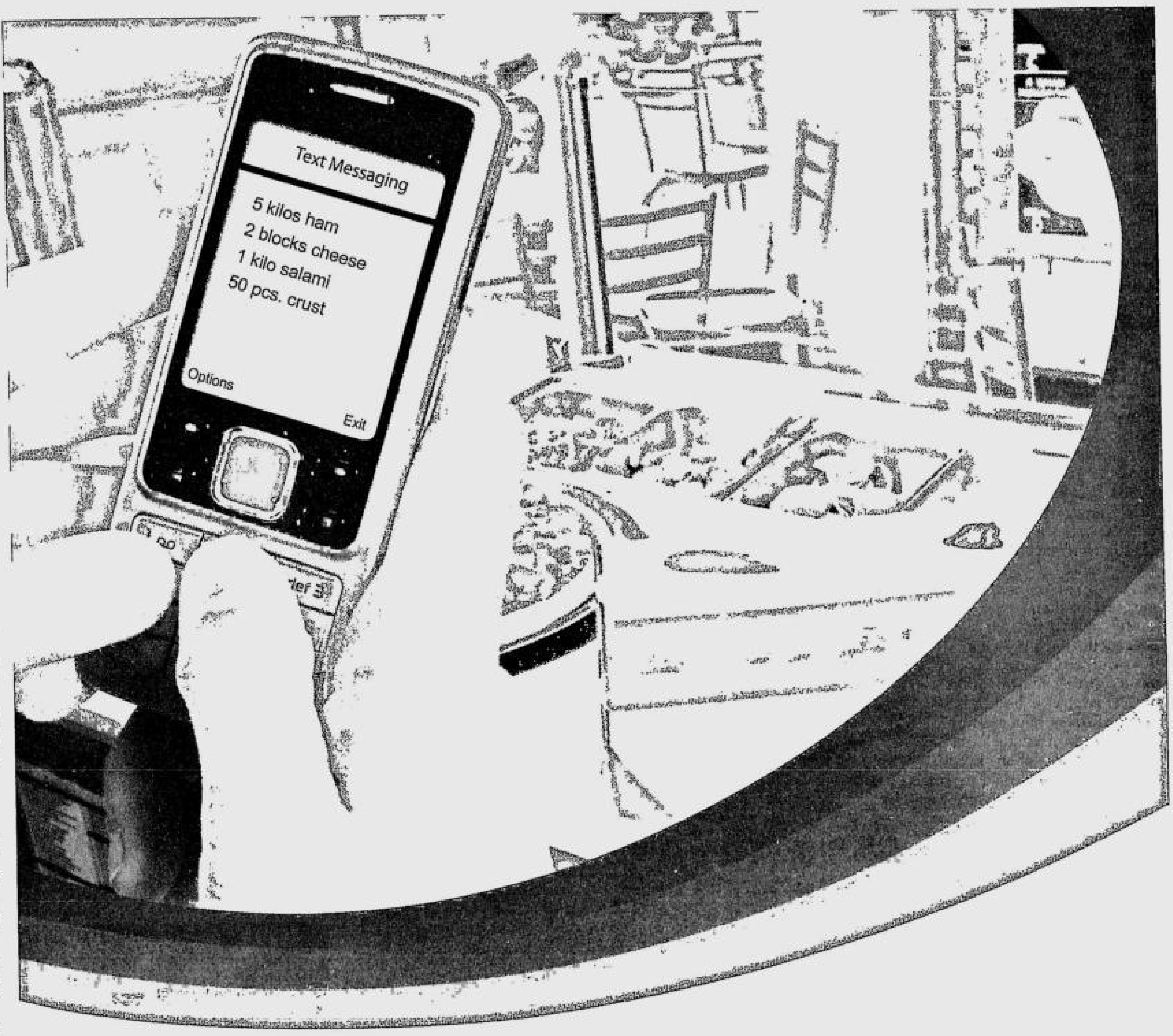
And despite what some consider high prices, demand is steadily increasing.

"We don't pray that more people die so we'll earn more money," said Ranillo Gomez, a man assembling metal coffins in another part of town. "There are just times when the demand for coffins is high."

Tita Canlas, the owner of Tita Tits Wood and Metal Craft, said prices were not really an issue.

"The fact is, we all end up in a coffin," she said. "Unless you just want to be thrown in a dump wrapped in a blanket." *Reuters*

A WORKER sands a coffin at a small workshop in the town of Santo Tomas. REUTERS



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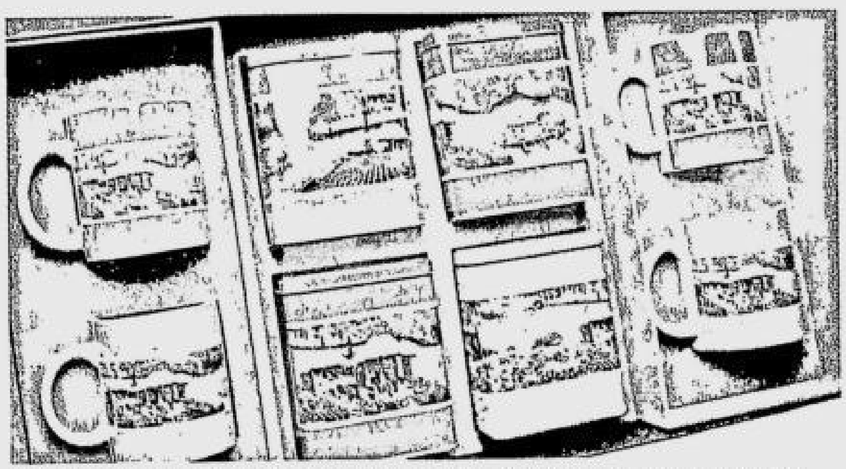
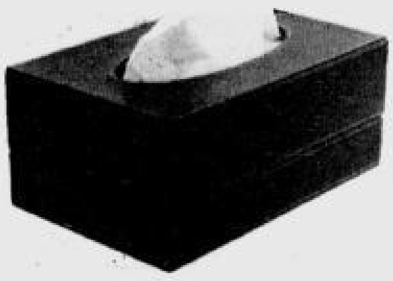
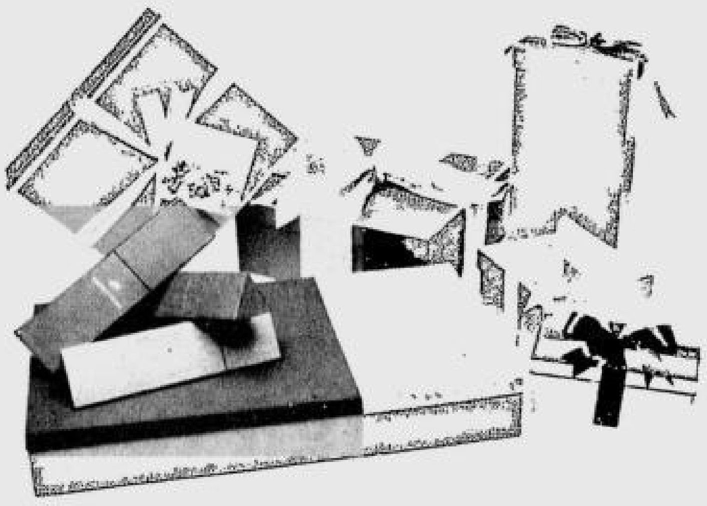


THE PHILIPPINE Coffee Selection Set with customized packaging on mugs and tin cans, showcasing artwork on the Philippine merchant trade of coffee in the early days





ALL DRESSED UP : Presentation and packaging will make your gift stand out from the rest.

What to give the CEO who has everything this Christmas

WHAT DO YOU GIVE THE CEO WHO HAS everything and is likely to receive the good, old reliable litany of wines, umbrellas and gift baskets each Christmas season?

Definitely, more interesting gift packages that can distinguish yourself or reinvent wines, umbrellas and gift baskets, says Maricar Pastrana-Holopainen, a partner of Solutions Corporate Services, a company that specializes in corporate and promotional gifts.

A gift's price tag alone won't do it, observes Holopainen, whose clients include top multinational banks and financial institutions, transport and airline conglomerates, hotels, call centers and telecommunication firms.

In the past four years, what has worked have been novel home centerpieces, collections of well-chosen music and carefully selected books and specialty coffee and tea sets that have been meticulously put together and packaged exquisitely "to tell a story," according to Holopainen.

With more than 200 repeat clients since 1999, Solutions Corporate Services has been catching the attention of CEO recipients because it includes notes and product literature in the packages that tell stories "about (A) who crafted and produced the gift; (B) how it was thoughtfully put together; or (C) what it is all about," relates Holopainen.

Solutions has recently focused on locally sourced, Filipino manufactured items for its high-end product line.

Products made in Cebu and in other parts of the country include: Serving trays made of shell and mother of pearl, lacquer and recycled wood boxes, and fine leather desk sets.

A set of Philippine-grown teas and coffee beans from the different coffee regions in the Philippines sent with "tasting notes" or description of these brews has been well received.

For the traveling CEO, a set of universal adaptors, travel-sized world clocks, travel sets and handy portable Harrods-type umbrellas provide him with much-needed accessories for overseas trips.

As in fashion as well as business—and almost all forms of human relations, for that matter—packaging counts a lot in corporate gifting.

Latest gift trends point to ecology friendly items, says Solutions

Getting the right box and ribbons, the appropriate display of the company's logo, the inner packing materials, and product literature—all in complementary colors and designs, of course—significantly increase a gift's value.

Solutions has in fact become adept at scouring local as well as regional centers in Hong Kong , China and Thailand for products across different price points and categories, including packaging materials.

Solutions also develops a full merchandise lineup for university and school stores as well as call center-branding merchandise.

High-end and Category A premium gifts, however, is the exclusive domain of Holopainen and partner Mary Leong, who once worked as a merchandiser for Bloomingdales in the United States.

Product development for these unique high-end gifts is a very challenging task and both partners normally work a year in advance to ensure that they can come up with a well-thought out and wide selection of gifts for the high-end category.

It helps, says Holopainen, that both of them are married to senior business executives.

"We instinctively have a feel of the needs and lifestyle preferences of corporate types." She notes: "We know they travel a lot and read a lot. They also like to entertain at home and host gatherings for family, friends and close business associates. Solutions, therefore, favors gifts that are one of a kind for the discerning CEO.

For a top telecommunications company, for instance, they once gathered a series of limited edition prints—with no two sets exactly alike—by renowned photographer Neal Oshima.

In the past two years, the trend has been toward home accessories and decorative centerpieces for the office.

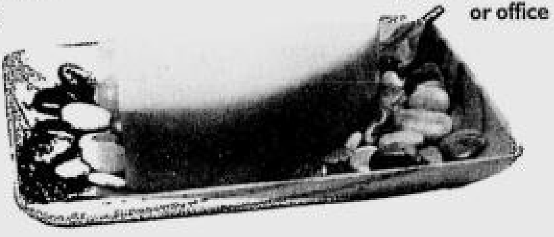
In the coming year, as the momentum for environmental sustainability builds up, high-end gifting is likely to shift toward items that are ecologically friendly.

But beyond themed gifts, Solutions relies on gifts that will satisfy not only the CEO—but also his wife.

"If she likes it, there is a great chance he will like it, too," opines Holopainen.

GIFT ideas for the traveling CEO

THE PHILIPPINE Fruit Collection by Noritake Philippines with prints from the 1900s by Fr. Manuel Blanco



CANDLE centerpiece shows versatility for display at home or office

Tips for High-end corporate gifting / Selecting VIP gifts simplified

OVER YEARS OF SPECIALIZING IN FINDing presents for top corporate executives, Solutions Corporate Services has compiled a list of easy-to-do tips.

Spruce up the good-old-reliable wine and food baskets. Add accessories such as a set of wine glasses or fine bar accessories for wines and unique and classic serving ware or trays for food baskets. You can still leave a lasting impression by making your gift stand out with functional and nonconsumable add-ons that make the difference. With these accessories, your gift has a greater chance of being kept even after the wine and food have been consumed.

Pay attention to presentation. The right packaging doubles the value of a gift and can ensure that your gift is well received or, at the very least, noticed. Conversely, the wrong packaging detracts from the gift's significance.

Discreetly incorporate your logo or corporate name in the gift box and the gift card. A big bold logo will not guarantee that your gift will be remembered. The appropriate display of your company name, whether in the box, gift card or product literature can stand out, provided it is placed in a prominent area.

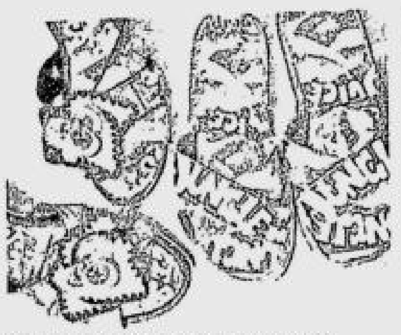
Get your timing right. Most CEOs use the long Christmas break to go on holiday with their families and may leave as early as mid-December. Thus, deliver your gift before Dec. 15. If you miss that window, wait until the first working week of January.

Send your gift with a personal note. If you've taken pains to carefully select a gift that will capture the CEO's imagination, it would be ideal to add a short note with your own signature.

(For gifting recommendations, you can click on www.giftsolutions.ph.)

THE SOLUTIONS Gifting Specialists Team, headed by Maricar Holopainen (seated, second from left)

Cash into trash: A simultaneous waste market fair at SM



KILUS (Kababaihan Iisa ang Layunin, Umunlad ang Sambayanan) is one of the participants.

THE SUCCESS OF THE WASTE MARket Fairs, which began early this year at the SM Supermall, has led the way to having one great fair before the year ends.

Not to be missed is the Simultaneous Waste Market Fair to be held on Oct. 27 at all SM Supermalls nationwide. This will be held at their respective parking areas from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

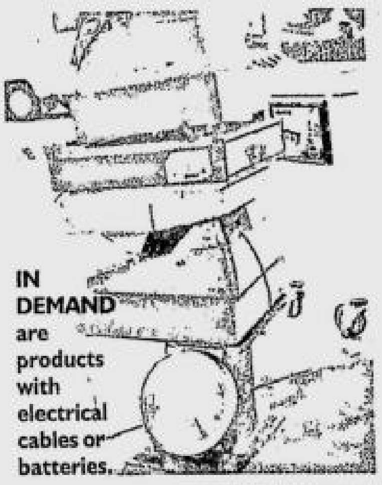
Called Trash to Cash, this project is spearheaded by the SM Supermalls in the partnership with the National Solid Waste Management Committee, Philippine Business for the Environment, Cenro Pasig, EPWD-QC and local government units.

What items can you exchange trash to cash? Here's a list of some of the participating recycling companies and the trash they'll exchange for cash.

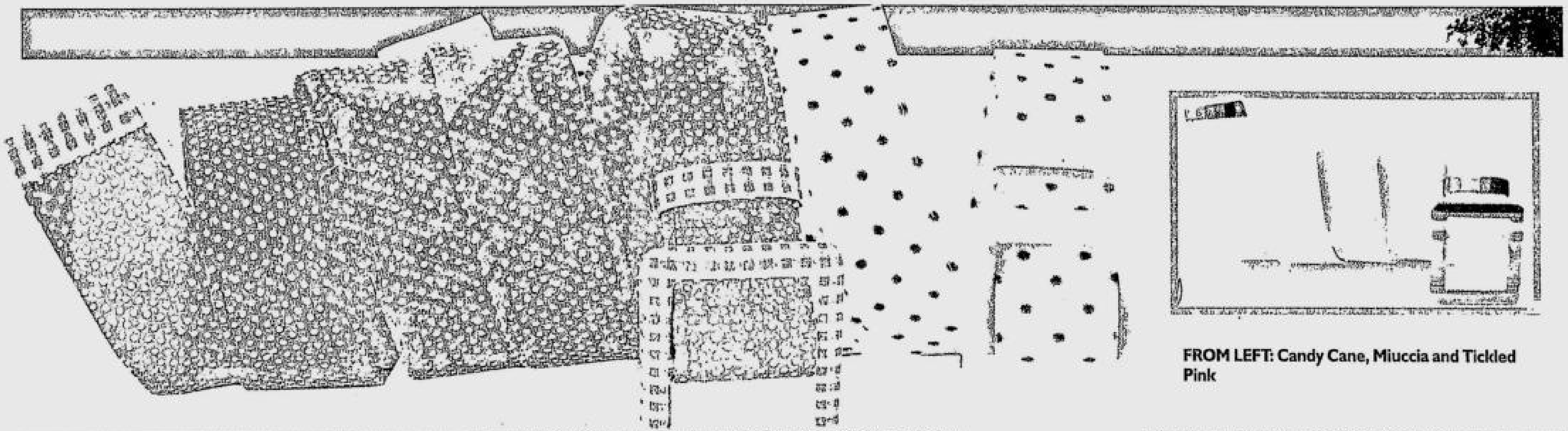
- Tipco/Linis Ganda for newspapers, scrap paper and cartons
- Polytrader/Linis Ganda for plastic products
- HMR for electronic wastes
- PRI for lead acid batteries
- YGARC for ink cartridges

MOST plastics can be recycled profitably without loss of quality.

Take this opportunity to de-clutter your home or office and turn trash into cash.



IN DEMAND are products with electrical cables or batteries.



FROM LEFT: Candy Cane, Miuccia and Tickled Pink

Entrepreneur's 'silly' addiction rakes in cash

Former Unicef employee finds fortune in belts

By Abigail L. Ho

IN A WORLD OF BLACKS AND whites, Lara Leal is a burst of color.

When everybody opted for neutrals, she went for bold colors. When the rest of the world settled for plains, she usually went with cutesy prints.

"I've always been *kikay* and I love dressing up. In the office, we had a dress code—typical office attire. From that alone, I knew I somehow didn't belong," she relates, adding that she always tried to jazz up her office garb, even if it meant sticking out like a sore thumb.

She adds she has always loved to accessorize—her favorite accessory being the belt.

Little did she know that her belt addiction would lead her to quit a job she loved and put up her own business.

'Silly' decision

It wasn't that she was bored with her job of helping raise funds for the United Nations Children's Fund in the Philippines, she recalls.

It was more the challenge of doing something new that led her to do some soul-searching.

"I worked with Unicef for six years, from 2000-2006. That had been my dream job since high school, and it was really fulfilling. But then I fell into the trap of doing the same thing for so long that I just wanted to do something new. I wanted to learn more. I wanted a new challenge," she says.

At first, she thought she could ease her restlessness by becoming a writer.

After five years in Unicef, she took creative writing classes in UP Diliman. While that opened her eyes to the possibility of doing something more with her skills, she ended up going back to work in January 2006, only to leave in June the same year.

Tough choice

The quitting part should have been really difficult, considering she had just gained permanent status as an employee.

Add to that the fact that what she was doing was actually making a difference in the lives of children all over the country.

But the urge to pursue her own destiny was just too strong to ignore.

"I figured I wasn't being fair to the organization because my heart was no longer there," she says.

That seemingly "silly" decision, she recalls now, is probably one of the best she has ever done in her life.

Difficult start

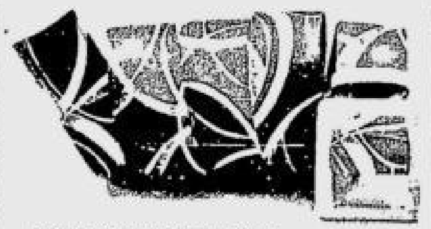
After resigning, she admits to not having the faintest idea as to what to do with her life then.

The novelty of resting and doing virtually nothing finally passed after two months.

And so, recharged after two months of rest and fueled by the support of

ENTREPRENEUR'S/ B3-5

JAPANESE Miss



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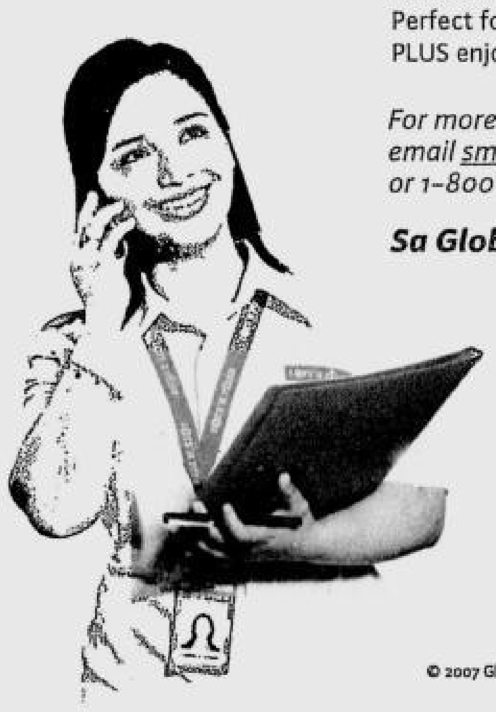


The Podium, Australian Embassy 'clean up' environment

THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY IN Manila and The Podium recently joined efforts in doing their share for the environment during the recent Clean Up the World, Clean Up the Philippines 2007 campaign. The project was also in partnership with the City Government of Mandaluyong and Clean Up the Philippines, the local arm of Clean Up the World.

They joined an estimated 35 million people in over 100 countries participating in the Clean Up the World activities.

The week-long celebration began with the project partners signing the manifesto pledging their support for the Clean Up the Philippines campaign. No less than Australian Ambassador Tony Hely graced the occasion together with Mandaluyong City Vice Mayor Renato Sta. Maria, Clean Up the Philippines chair Roald Arcangel, and The Podium mall manager Christian Mathay.

During the rest of the week, the mall served as a sign up center for the weekend clean-up activities. Shoppers could sign up for Clean Up the Philippines activities like the Village Clean Up in Barangay Amihan in Project 3, Quezon City; as well as Barangay Clean Ups near Pasig River in Mandaluyong City and in Sta. Cruz Manila. They could also join activities in the provincial areas like the Mangrove Reforestation, as well as Clean Up Activities of streets and parks in Mandaue City and in the Benguet State University in Benguet, La Trinidad.

A Bikathon to raise awareness about climate change also highlighted the weekend activities. Representatives from the project partners, cycling clubs, and volunteers all gathered together at The Podium, which was its starting point.

Seen cycling for a cause were Pablo Kang, the Australian Embassy in Manila's Counselor for Political-Economic and Public Affairs; Jimmy Isidro, the City of Mandaluyong's Head for Public Information; and various cycling clubs. The latter included the Live Strong Cycling Club, and the Vergara Cycling Club.

Clean Up the World is considered to be one of the world's largest environmental campaigns, and is held in partnership with the United Nations Environmental Program (Unep). It was founded by Australian sportsman Ian Kiernan, who was shocked by the pollution he encountered when he sailed around the world in the BOC Challenge solo yacht race.

Back in Sydney, he enlisted the help of friends and organized Clean Up Sydney Harbor Day in 1989. The event motivated 40,000 volunteers to remove rusted car bodies, plastics of all kinds, glass bottles, and cigarette butts from the harbor. This gave way to the Clean Up the World concept in 1993 after gaining the support of Unep.

In 1998, Ian was awarded the prestigious Unep Sasakawa Environment Prize for mobilizing tens of millions of people around the world to take responsibility for their own environment. He has also been awarded a GLobal 500 Laureate, while Clean Up the World has been honored with a Building World Citizenship Award from the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

Clean Up the Philippines, Clean Up the World is a joint project of the Australian Embassy in Manila, the City of Mandaluyong, Clean Up the Philippines, and The Podium.

Australian Embassy's Counselor for Political-Economic and Public Affairs Pablo Kang and City Government of Mandaluyong Head for Public Information Jimmy Isidro with the Live Strong Cycling Club, the Mandaluyong Cycling Federation, the Mandaluyong Cycling Club and Vergara Cycling Club.

Win big prizes in Bingo for Bantay Bata 163

WIN AS MUCH AS P1.5 MILLION AND OTHER BIG prizes in Pagcor's 2007 Bingo Fiesta for Bantay Bata 163 on Oct. 28 at the World Trade Center on Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. This charity bingo will be done for a good cause, helping Bantay Bata 163's noteworthy projects on its 10th year milestone.

Bingo is a popular pastime where randomly selected numbers are drawn and players match those numbers to those appearing on their bingo cards. The first person to have a card where the drawn numbers form a specified pattern is the winner and calls out the word "bingo!"

Net proceeds from Pagcor's charity bingo will be donated for the benefit of Bantay Bata 163, one of the key programs of the ABS-CBN Foundation Inc that aims for the protection and welfare of the Filipino child and family.

The major prizes are a hefty P1.5 million in the jackpot 10th game and P1 million in the 5th game. Also at stake is P100,000 each for the other games.

Everyone is invited, with tickets now being sold at P1,500 each (inclusive of 4-on-10 up bingo cards).

Proceeds will help fund Bantay Bata 163's current projects.

To avail of tickets, call China or Freda at 411-0856, 925-5255, 411-6625, 925-5268, 922-2163, 0926-2555555, or 163.

Chinese medicine expert in Manila

LICENSED ACUPUNCTURE AND oriental medicine expert Dr. Andrew Wu L. Ac will hold a two-day seminar on traditional Chinese medicine on Nov. 14 and 15 at the LB Soriano Hall, Seameo Innotech, Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

Wu will give a lecture on the Taichi Acupuncture Theory, which focuses on the treatment of various nervous system and age-related conditions such as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, stroke, asthma, depression, ophthalmologic conditions and chronic headaches among others, using the theories related to Taichi. He will also give a talk on scalp acupuncture, which involves the application of scalp needled technique in the cerebellum region.

Wu holds a doctoral degree in Oriental Medicine and operates his own traditional Chinese medicine clinic in California. He has published three books on traditional Chinese medicine and scalp acupuncture and is currently the president of the Alliance of World's Traditional Medicine. He is also a visiting professor at the Tian Jin Traditional Medicine College in China.

The seminar on traditional Chinese medicine is organized by Healthdev Institute and the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God. To register and for additional information, call 426-4325 and ask for Jenny, or e-mail healthdev_clinics@yahoo.com.ph. A 5-percent discount on registration fee will be given to those who will sign up on or before Oct. 30.

Mr. Softy's 1st raffle draw in Marikina

SINCE ITS INCEPTION, MR. SOFTY Ice Cream has been bringing innovations to the country's soft-serve ice cream industry. As a result of the company's dedication to producing top-quality ice cream, Mr. Softy continues to be the undisputed fresh ice cream store of choice in the Philippines. And to thank its loyal customers for seven years of continued support, Mr. Softy gave away exciting prizes via its 7th anniversary bash at the Riverbanks Activity Center in Marikina City. Hosted by Sexytery of Love Radio and Mr. Softy's marketing manager John Mabatan, the audience was treated to a day full of fun games and surprises. The celebration also saw basketball aficionados join the Mr. Softy Hoopla Basketball Shootout Challenge. Renowned cager Tony De la Cruz of the Alaska Aces joined in the fun.

The event highlight was Mr. Softy's anniversary raffle draw. Jocelyn Tenerife of Cebu won an Acer laptop, Reymar Canada of Makati won an i-POd nano and Julius Bryan Mangubat of Batangas won a Nokia N70. Mr. Softy gift certificates were also given away to 20 lucky winners.

For those who would like to catch on the fun, the second draw will be on Nov. 11 and the grand draw will be on Jan. 6 where at stake is a brand new Honda City. Joining is so easy.

For every single purchase of one Mr. Softy Rumble Crunch, two Mr. Softy Glaze or three cups with toppings, you will be given one raffle ticket. Fill-out the raffle ticket and drop it to the outlet where you made the purchase. Keep the other half of the ticket as proof of purchase. Promo period is up to Jan. 6, 2008. Deadline for submission of entries for the grand draw will be on Jan. 5 for NCR outlets and Jan. 1 for provincial outlets.

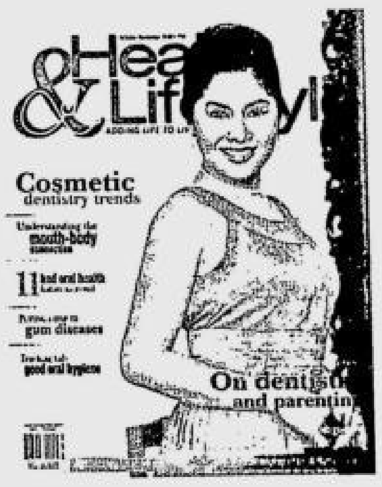
ASIATRUST N. DOMINGO BRANCH NEW LOCATION

Asiatrust Bank's N. Domingo Branch recently moved to a better, more strategic location at the G/F, A&L Building, along N. Domingo St., San Juan, M.M. This will enable the SME's in the vicinity to enjoy the longer banking hours, longer check clearing cut-off as well as the other unique products and services offered by Asiatrust Bank. Shown in photo after the blessing are (from left to right): BOSG head Larry San Jose, RBS head Renee Andrews, NDO BM Araceli Macabalo, BBG head Josephine Co, NDO service head Sarah Deseo, NDO CRO Tintin Cabrera and NDO teller Francis Nicolas.

DB&B BUILDS CEO'S FIRST MANILA OFFICE

DB&B, one of Asia's premiere design and construction companies, was designated as the official builder for Corporate Executive Offices' (CEO) first office in Manila. CEO is the largest privately owned operator of serviced offices in Australia with 20 years of success in the business. For its Manila operations, the company will occupy the entire 12th floor of Robinsons Summit Centre along Ayala Avenue, Makati City, offering fully furnished services offices ranging from one- to 20-person facilities featuring full reception, telephone and message handling services, voicemail, unified messaging, cleaning, conference room as well as in-house food service amenities. Serviced offices provide the best flexible solution to small, start-up companies on the lookout for non-traditional office leasing arrangements, as well as international companies seeking to open a branch office in the Philippines. CEO's newly constructed offices offer the convenience of a prestigious business address, state-of-the-art amenities and dedicated secretarial services. In keeping with the cutting-edge standards of its main office in Australia, CEO's design team collaborated with DB&B in creating one of the most prestigious business centers in the Philippines. DB&B also has offices in Hong Kong, China, Malaysia and Singapore. Present at the contract signing were (from left) Mariska Folley, CEO operations manager; Jason McKimm, CEO project manager; Alesya Folley, CEO business center manager; Jonas Marcelo, CEO general manager; Melot Sunga-Panlilio, DB&B business development director, and Gina R. Gomez, DB&B senior project director.

Health & Lifestyle zeroes in on oral health, parenting



DENTAL HEALTH IS ONE of the most neglected health conditions among many Filipinos today. According to the Department of Health, the most common oral health problems in the Philippines are tooth decay and gum diseases.

To help put a stop to this alarming situation, Health & Lifestyle magazine focuses on oral health in its October-November issue. The current issue gives tips on how to improve oral health through proper dental health care and with the help of the booming cosmetic dentistry industry. In addition, H&L addresses other dental concerns such as temporomandibular joint (TMJ) pains and periodontal diseases.

Aside from dental concerns, the magazine also tackles issues on parenting like teaching children proper dental hygiene, setting good study habits and teaching kids the value of saving.

The magazine also focuses on other matters that affect a child's development, like violence and aggressive behavior and engaging too much on passive activities.

Gracing H&L's cover is dentist Dr. Joyce Ambray-Reyes, one of the pioneers of the temporomandibular joint (TMJ) treatment in the Philippines. She shares her passion for her craft and on being a doting mother to her 7-year old son.

Health & Lifestyle magazine is available in all National Bookstores and other magazine outlets nationwide. For subscription inquiries, call 813-5433 or 892-0723 to 24.

MARIPOSA
Groundbreaking Ceremonies
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TAYTAY Budget Hotel

MARIPOSA BUDGET HOTEL TAYTAY. The newest site of the Mariposa chain of budget hotels. **GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONIES** was held on Oct. 11, 2007 at Manila East Rd., Taytay, Rizal. Mariposa is known for its hotel ambience and amenities offered at affordable prices. After the successful opening of its Stanford St., Cubao branch last year, Mariposa Budget Hotel Taytay will rise to serve the booming areas of Taytay, Angono, Cainta, Binangonan, Antipolo and Eastern parts of Rizal. For more info call 658-3033. Photo shows Mrs. A. Delos Santos, Arch. Franco Vicente, Exec. Asst. Nancy Debil. Mrs Celeste Caruncho Ms Isa Caruncho Mr Emiliano Caruncho. III, Mr F Calma Engr Mario Baguiu Engr L Tomas

DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST ALUMNI HONORED

Achievements of distinguished alumni were recognized during the awarding ceremonies at the UE Alumni Grand Reunion 2007 held Sep. 30 at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City. Lawyer Eugene T. Mateo, UE's 2007 Most Outstanding Alumnus, led the awardees. The other distinguished alumni awardees in their respective fields are Ma. Victoria M. Ac-Ac (graduate school); Alicia A. Risos-Vidal (law); Ligaya B. Chan-Virata (dentistry); Commie C. Pagunuran (arts and sciences); Armando L. Andres (engineering); Maricel R. Ngo (computer studies and systems); Franklin B. Marcelo (education); Ronaldo Q. Ruiz (fine Arts). Special achievement awardees: Pedro S. Navarro (community service); Ruben C. De Lara (corporate management in private business); Ofelia Dimalanta Lazarte (education); Dimas S. Soguilon (government service); Ramon P. Aquino (government service); Ronald M. Uychutin (security management); Reducio G. Samaco (military service); Florentino S. Dulalia Jr. (entrepreneurship); Danilo O. Mendez (business development); Sigfreid Barros Sanchez (performing arts); Norris M. Castillo (visual arts); Alfredo M. Lobo (journalism); Sonia Torres Aquino (local government service); Silvino T. Pampilo, Jr. (judiciary); Melencio 'Red' Recaña (international service of the judiciary). Special alumni presidential awardees: Franchito N. Diamante; Ariel Joseph B. Arias; Eugene T. Mateo. Outstanding Jubilarian: Salvador S. Collantes. Shown are, from left, Ronaldo Ruiz (Red Mansueto accepting the award); Col. Commie Pagunuran (professor Mercy Candelaria accepting the award); Maricel Ngo; Dr. Ligaya Chan-Virata (Dr. Jose J. Virata accepting the award); Dr. Franklin Marcelo; engineer Armando Andres; Dr. Ma. Victoria Ac-Ac, and lawyer Alicia Risos-Vidal. Also shown are (7th to 11th from left) UE president Ester Garcia, UE EVP Carmelita Mateo, lawyer Eugene Mateo, UEAAI president Angelica Marquez, UE College of Dentistry Dean Brenda Dev

Promoting youth empowerment through business education

IN TODAY'S HIGHLY COMPETITIVE WORK environment, it takes more than a college diploma and a skill or two to land a good job. A knack for business and some familiarity with corporate workings set the fortunate few apart from the rest of the new graduates.

To empower less privileged students with much-needed business skills, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), through the Embassy of Switzerland in Manila, has signed an agreement with the Education for Youth Enterprise (EYE) Foundation Inc. for a partnership in the Wiwag (the German term for business weeks) training program.

The agreement was signed by Irene Flueckiger, counsellor and deputy head of mission of the embassy of Switzerland in Manila, and EYE Foundation Inc. representative and Holcim Philippines business development head Jocelyn J. Perez.

Under the agreement, the Swiss Embassy funded the EYE Foundation's four-week training program for 100 college students from the Central Mindanao University in Musuan, Bukidnon.

Established through Holcim Philippines Inc., the EYE Foundation implements Wiwag, a program which teaches student participants how to manage a company by providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge in all facets of business including finance, human resource, marketing and production.

Holcim acquired the license from the Ernst Schmidheiny Foundation in Switzerland to run Wiwag locally.

Sponsored by corporations, organizations and concerned individuals, Wiwag training sessions are conducted by volunteer instructors who are managers and officers of the country's top corporations. Armed with years of experience in various departments such as communication, human resources and development, they provide the student-trainees with realistic and useful business knowledge.

Since its implementation in 2005, Wiwag Business Weeks has provided 1,377 students from 21 state universities and colleges around the country not only hope for a better future, but also a unique and tangible advantage to help them succeed in their chosen careers.

(For more information on Wiwag, get in touch with the EYE Foundation at 870-0165 or 898-1980.)

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Entrepreneur's 'silly' addiction rakes in cash

From page B3-3

husband Carlo, Lara decided to embark on the whole new world that she had long wanted to explore.

Her baby, Silly Me Clothing, was finally born in June last year.

"It was a lot of hard work. I started out by looking for good sewers. I wasn't satisfied with the quality of the work of the first few I worked with. So I scoured Kamuning, Divisoria and a lot of other places," she relates. "My fabrics were also initially from Divisoria and Kamuning, but there was always that risk that you'd get something that was not of such good quality."

It took four months of hits and misses, a lot of support from her husband and loads of patience before she finally decided to start selling her products.

"The June-October (2006) period was a lesson in business, human relations and psychology for me. I didn't want to settle with just any sewer or any fabric supplier. I wanted sewers who had pride in their work, those who won't settle for *pwede na*. And I wanted fabrics that were of good quality—something I would use myself," she says.

"I know that my products are a bit pricey (from P425 to P575 each), but people still buy them because they know they're getting value for their money. It's really because of the quality," she says, "My highest cost component is really labor because belts are difficult to do. And I don't want to haggle with my sewers. Good workmanship comes at a price."

Start of something big

She has been in the belt business for a little more than a year, but Lara has already carved her niche in the local fashion scene.

Every time she posts new items on her online store, sillymeclothing.multiply.com, at 4 p.m. of every second Thursday of the month, loyal clients snap up her fabric belts faster than she can say "silly me."

From "friendly purchases," or those by friends wanting to help make her business earn, she now has a steady clientele.

Most orders are for more than one belt, with some reaching 12 belts—or all the designs for each collection—at a time.

"It really surprises me. I actually ask some of my clients if all the belts they order are for personal use or for gifts. When they say everything's just for them, I try to ask them if they're sure and remind them that there will be a new collection next month. But they always end up buying all the belts anyway," she says.

She adds that most of her orders are repeats, with loyal clients buying belts from each of the collections she puts out.

She also gets a number of new customers—some of whom eventually become loyal clients—each month.

Taking good care of her customers is one of her secrets to success.

She maintains a database of orders that allows her to recommend which new designs her customers can order, judging from their previous purchases.

Apart from her Multiply site, she also consigns some of her designs to Dressing Room at the Archeology section of the Powerplant Mall in Rockwell. She also sells her fabric belts in bazaars.

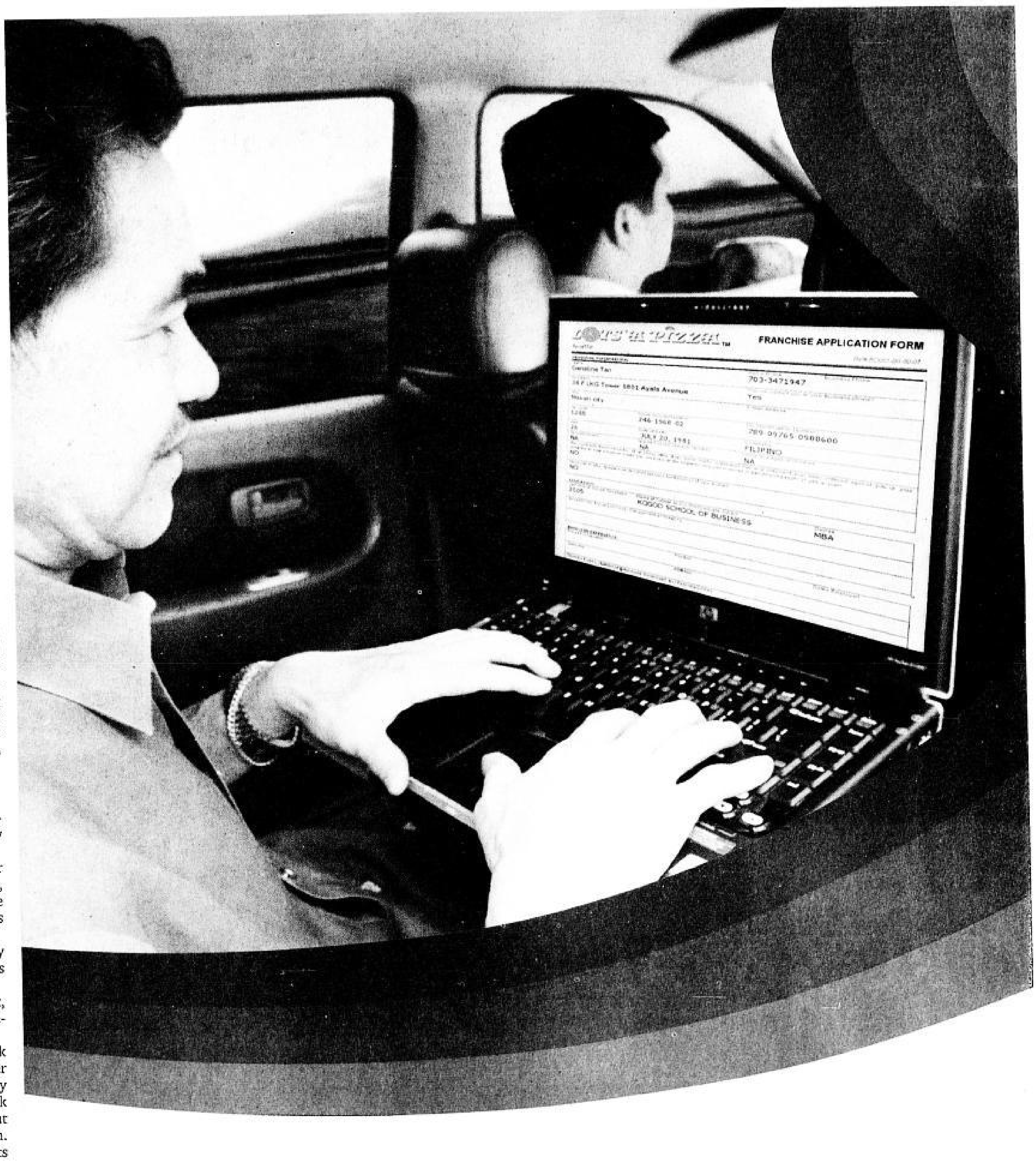
Silly Me Clothing will soon make its way to the US and Canada through online store www.sillymeclothing.com.

Designs to be offered there will be exclusive to her overseas customers.

Lara is also preparing for the full-blown launch of her clothing line, and designing new belts for summer as early as now.

She is also working on a collaboration with Ichigo Shoes for matching belts and shoes.

"I really believe that your clothes shouldn't define you. You define your clothes by the way you put them together," she says. "And all the while I thought I was going to be a writer. Who would have thought I'd end up in this business?'



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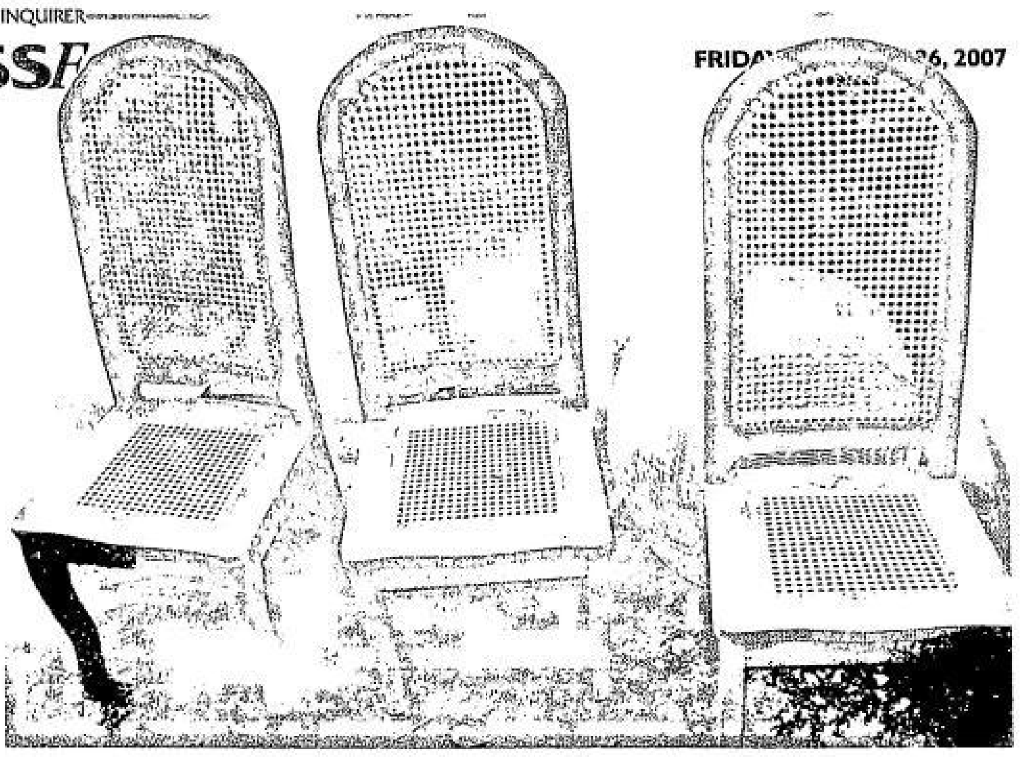
WORKERS of A.B. Buama Furniture (right) use local materials to make home furnishings (far right).



Aside from scissors, city also makes quality furniture

Text and photos by Joanna Los Baños
Inquirer Southern Luzon

TABACO CITY—THIS CITY IS KNOWN AS the best cutlery producer in the region, making scissors, bolos, knives and even razors, grass cutters and other farm tools.

But not known to many, located in the outskirts of the city are furniture makers who make unique and useful home furnishings.

Along with other furniture shops, the A. B. Buama Furniture is located in Barangay San Antonio, one of the villages that motorists pass through when going to Mayon Resthouse near the foot of Mayon Volcano.

Learning the ropes

Starting as a worker in his father's rattan business 20 years ago, Honorato Buama, has learned the ropes of running the business.

After years of working for and helping his father, he decided to put up his own furniture shop, not considering his elementary education as a hindrance.

Although the business has not made him rich, the 46-year-old Buama said he was able to build a house for his family and send his five children, ages 14 to 22, to school from his earnings.

He finds fulfillment in the thought that he provided his neighbors with a decent livelihood because of his business.

Junior Rufo, a third year high school student at the San Antonio National High School, is a part-time worker at the Buama Furniture.

"When I have no classes, I work here to help my family and so that I will have allowance for school," Rufo said, adding that he is happy working at the furniture shop.

No capital

Buama confessed that he started his business with no capital at all.

He merely relied on customers who paid in advance for their orders.

"We use the down payment to buy materials for their orders," Buama said, adding that this was how the business survived.

He said that business was generally doing good, but he also encounters problems like other entrepreneurs.

Most of the time, he said, his problem was financial.

"Especially when we have to deliver the furniture on a specific date and it is not yet finished because our money is short for purchasing additional materials," Buama said.

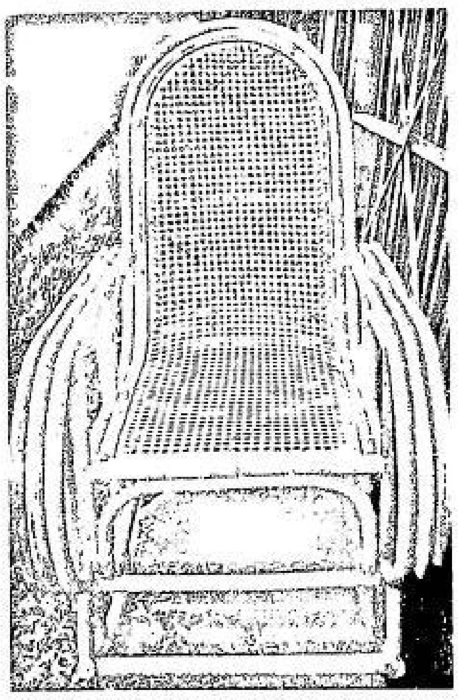
"The materials are always available. But it's the money to purchase these materials that is not," he said.

Some of the materials Buama uses are anonang wood, rattan, wicker, abaca, and other materials that are readily available and preferred by customers.

Most of the materials used in furniture making come from neighboring Catanduanes and Metro Manila.

Out of the mostly native materials, Buama makes sala sets, dining sets, rocking

ASIDE/B3-7



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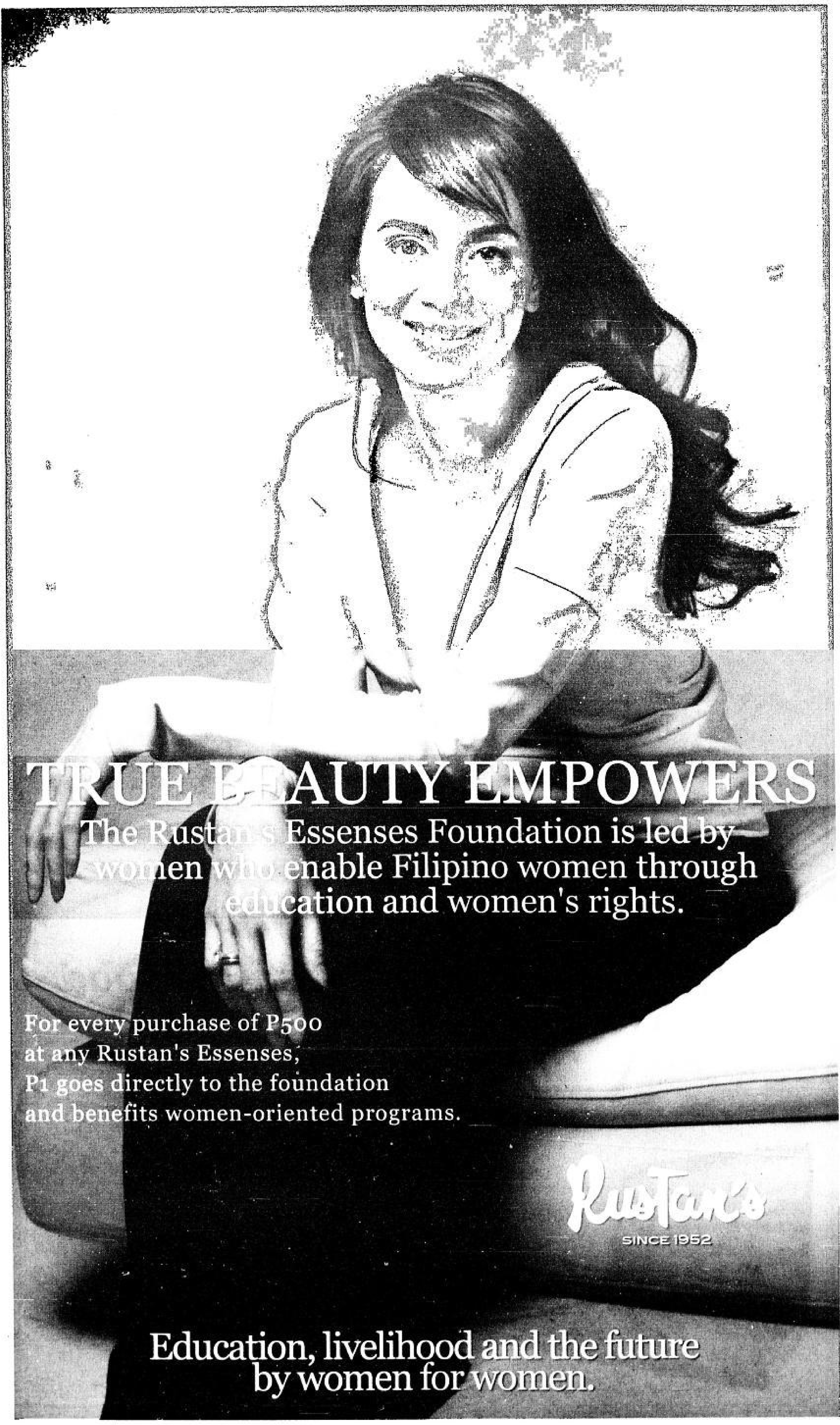

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Oregano, siling labuyo spice up agri programs

By Amy R. Remo

A LOCALLY GROWN HERB AND SPICE with curative properties are expected to help drive the growth of the Philippine natural ingredients industry.

According to the Department of Agriculture, siling labuyo (scientific name: *Capsicum frutescens*) can potentially reduce the risk of cancer, cardiovascular diseases and cataract.

Oregano, on the other hand, is touted to have anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-oxidant, anti-fungal and anti-viral properties.

Siling labuyo and oregano are just two of the indigenous plants being promoted by the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research through its Indigenous Plants for Health and Wellness RDE Program.

This program aims to promote and highlight the importance of indigenous plants to encourage farmers to plant them.

Scientists and researchers said, however, that these findings have yet to be subjected to further chemical analyses for validation.

Nevertheless, Evelyn B. Rodriguez, professor from the Institute of Chemistry at the University of Los Baños, said the siling labuyo fruit was already being used to ease arthritis and rheumatism.

Also known as chili pepper, the labuyo is said to be an effective cure for dyspepsia, flatulence and toothache.

The siling labuyo is more commonly used in Filipino kitchens as a condiment, while the leaves are used in cooking.

However, recent studies show that the siling labuyo's leaves and fruits have phytochemicals, which people need to stay healthy.

Phytochemicals, chemical compounds found in fruits and vegetables, act as antioxidants and can also "modulate detoxification enzymes, stimulate the immune system, alter the body's cholesterol mechanism and reduce blood pressure," according to Rodriguez.

Rodriguez has thus called for more studies to be done on siling labuyo and other local plants like malunggay.

Once the claims are proven, demand for these plants is expected to grow, thus providing another incentive for farmers to plant them.

Meanwhile, Estela C. Taño of the DA's Southern Tagalog Integrated Agricultural Research Center, revealed that oregano also has medicinal properties.

SILING labuyo is said to have medicinal properties

PHOTOS BY DA-BAR

Philippine oregano (*Coleus aromaticus*) has been largely used as a kitchen ingredient, as its strongly flavored leaves make an excellent addition to grilled meat, fried vegetables, and other specialty dishes that need that distinct aromatic flavor.

According to Taño, the fleshy and scaly leaves of oregano are rich in volatile oils, believed to be responsible for slowing down spoilage of food and thus, minimizing the risk of ingesting harmful microorganisms.

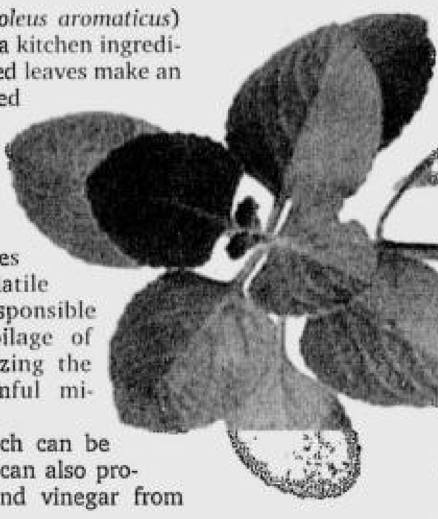
If the oregano research can be pursued, Taño said one can also produce wine, juice tea and vinegar from oregano.

"There is now a great market potential for these kinds of products especially because consumers are becoming more cautious about what they eat," she said.

Taño said these potential products from oregano are based on the results of an indigenous technology documentation research effort. This is aimed at developing innovative products from indigenous plants and then marketing them to generate income and sustainable community-based livelihood.

This research on technologies on production, processing and value-adding is funded by BAR through its National Technology Commercialization Program.

Taño added that once the technologies are perfected, these potential product lines of oregano will greatly boost the government's promotion of agribusiness in the countryside.



OREGANO can be used to produce wine, vinegar, tea

WICKER chair for sale

Aside from scissors,city also makes quality furniture

From page B3-6

chairs, tables, doors, shelves, and even made-to-order and custom-made pieces of furniture.

Customers can bring pictures or draw the furniture designs they want Buama to execute.

Buama said a single piece of furniture would take about three to five days to make, while a sala set would take about a month.

A sala set costs from P10,000 to P18,000; dining sets, P8,000 to P10,000; and a single chair, P600.

"But all would depend on what materials are going to be used," Buama said.

His home doubles as the furniture shop. He displays his goods in front of the house, while he works out back.

Buama said his customers come mostly from the neighboring towns and cities.

"Some drop by by chance. If they pass by, they usually stop at our store," he said.

Once they do, Buama hopes that they leave an order behind.

(For more information, please contact A. B. Buama Furniture at 09284812036 and 09216119667).

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BUSINESS Friday

BENGUET State University has made arabica production one of its flagship projects.

Arabica top Cordillera brew

By Delmar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—Homegrown Arabica is fast brewing as the Cordillera's premium coffee.

Entrepreneurs say that once production hits commercial quantities, farmers will have another income-earner rolled up their soiled sleeves.

"Our company markets Arabica as Benguet coffee or Sagada coffee, depending on the place of cultivation. We are trying to penetrate local establishments, hotels and restaurants," said Alipio Alonzo Castillo, the company's legal counsel.

The effort, however, is hampered by the lack of supply, Castillo said.

"This keeps the highland coffee industry in its infancy stage."

Aware of the shortage, the Benguet State University has made Arabica production one of its flagship projects.

It has devoted a portion of its lot in Barangay Puguis here to research on how to increase the local variety's yield.

According to Prof. Valentino Macanes, program leader of the BSU's Arabica coffee research and development program in the region, the Cordillera climate is best suited for massive Arabica production.

Bukidnon and Davao are also producing Arabica, Macanes said, but the Cordillera's coffee plants had retained their advantage because of the temperate climate.

He cited Benguet and Mt. Province where the coffee "tastes and smells good."

Benguet has 223.89 hectares of land devoted to Arabica, while Mt. Province has 85.01 ha.

Both produce an average of 300 kilograms a hectare.

The two have potential areas of 5,968 ha and 4,867 ha, respectively, for coffee production, he said.

Once the areas are maximized, production could hit 1,000-2,000 kg a hectare, enough to seriously compete with imported coffee beans.

Raw coffee beans are sold from P120 to P140 a kg.

The prices could readily increase once the local variety's processed version gets the necessary market branding, Macanes said.

He said farmers were still reluctant to cultivate Arabica because it would take an average of three years to harvest.

They find the wait too long, he said.

The good news is that the Office of the President has given the industry a push. President Macapagal-Arroyo has tasked her regional assistant, Thomas Killip, former mayor of Sagada, Mountain Province, to lead efforts to increase the region's Arabica coffee production.

Killip was present during the stakeholders' consultation on coffee production held at the BSU last week.

"Our support though is not to subsidize production but to assist in the advocacy for coffee Arabica and help in the organizational aspect of production and product marketing," he told the INQUIRER.

Ms Arroyo noticed the local coffee during her visit to Sagada in 2002, he said.

"Why don't you push for its commercial production?" Killip quoted Ms Arroyo as saying.

That's how efforts to support the industry began, he said.

In fact, Killip is a key figure in the creation of a coffee council for Mountain Province.

The council, which brought together representatives of the local government, farmers and church, was assigned to formulate policies and programs on coffee production.

Coffee production has enhanced the region's role in the North Luzon Agribusiness Quadrangle (NLAQ), one of the super regions, Killip said.

CORDILLERA

BENGUET and Mountain Province coffee "tastes and smells good."

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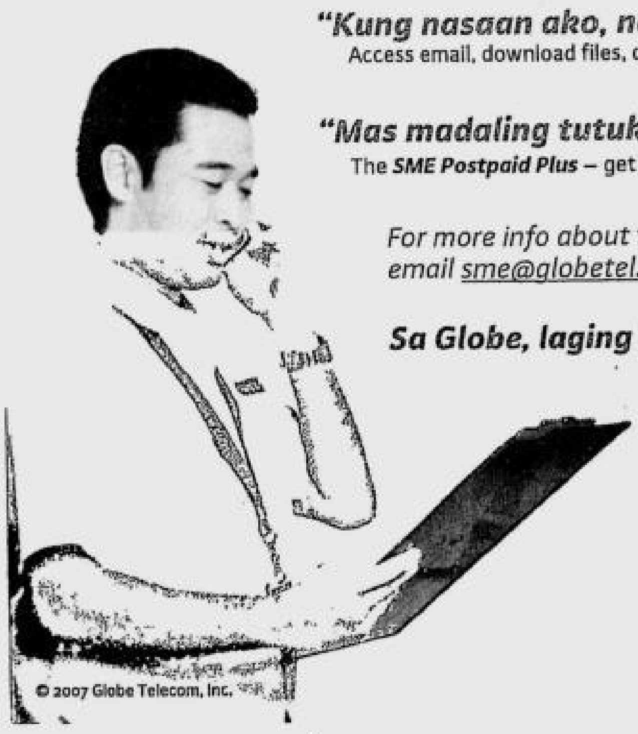

ROADTALK

E-mail: sprojects@inquirer.com.ph
Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Vote a road hero via SMS

'Bayani ng Kalsada is open to anyone, including transport associations and car clubs'

DO YOU KNOW A DRIVER WHO has gone above and beyond the call of duty on the highway?

Goodyear Philippines Inc is looking for local drivers who embody responsible and selfless motoring through its Bayani ng Kalsada campaign launched recently.

The leading tire manufacturer is inviting the public to nominate stories of courage and extraordinary service. Entries may be sent via SMS--simply text BNK to register and send to 2299.

Only third parties may submit nomination forms, which are also available at Goodyear Servitek dealers and TyrePro outlets nationwide, various Land Transportation Office (LTO) branches, Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) offices, selected Caltex stations, as well as at the offices of Filtrepreneur Franchise and Centro Negosyo.

Entries may be sent to any Goodyear Servitek dealer and TyrePro outlet nationwide, or via mail at PO Box 7260, Domestic Airport, Manila or PO Box 1384 MCPO, Makati City, via fax at the Goodyear office (876-4596) or at the secretariat (893-7049), or via e-mail at www.goodyear.com.ph/bayani. Deadline of submission of entries is on Dec. 31.

Last year, Hilario T. Mendiola, a 42-year-old seasoned off-road driver and mechanic from Angeles City, was picked as the overall winner. In May 2006, Mendiola saved a 20-year-old man trapped inside his vehicle after the flatbed truck carrying it accidentally rammed a barrier of the Megadike on the Mancatian Riverbank, Porac, Pampanga.

Now on its second year, the search aims to generate more stories of heroism. Bayani ng Kalsada is open to anyone, including transport associations and car clubs, who wish to nominate a "Tsuper Pinoy," representing drivers of public utility vehicles, trucks and private cars. The nationwide program was developed by Goodyear to locate, honor and publicize those drivers who clearly qualify to be proclaimed "heroes."

The contest has four categories: public utility jeepney drivers, taxi/FX drivers, commercial truck/bus drivers and private drivers. Each winner will receive P30,000 cash prize, P500,000 worth of personal accident insurance, P25,000 worth of gas coupons, P20,000 worth of SM Home Appliance, Food cart with P500 worth of products, P10,000 worth of training certificate, Revicon Forte gift pack, plaque, as well as a Bayani ng Kalsada special jacket, cap and shirt.

Supported by the LTO, LTFRB, and the Department of Transportation and Communication, the campaign also involves partners SM Appliance Center, Caltex Philippines, Standard Insurance, Filtrepreneur Franchise Inc, Centro Negosyo Inc, Revicon Forte, DZBB, and LS FM.

For more information, log on to www.goodyear.com.ph/bayani or call the Bayani ng Kalsada secretariat at 817-7316.

CAPTIVA:
Balanced vehicle to fit all lifestyles

GENERAL MOTORS PHILIPPINES' latest all-new Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV), the Chevrolet Captiva, has now made its debut in the local market. The Chevrolet Captiva was designed to meet the demands of active drivers for daily business use, leisure, and family recreation.

The Chevrolet Captiva offers a combination of the best characteristics of a comfortable, dynamic sedan with the toughness of a SUV. This makes the vehicle perfectly suited for congested urban driving, long highway journeys and fun adventures on rough terrain. The Captiva has proven itself over 5 million km of tests under different road conditions and different weather conditions all over the globe.

The Chevrolet Captiva is the result of collaboration among 11 GM research and development centers around the world.

The Chevrolet Captiva has a strong character with thoroughly modern proportions.

Calming interior

In addition to its roomy comfort, the Chevrolet Captiva's interior—from the side door to the console—was thoughtfully designed to emphasize its calming nature. The Chevrolet Captiva is equipped with a premium audio system that includes a radio receiver and 6-disc MP3-compatible front CD changer.

The automatic transmission is a 5-speed Tiptronic, providing drivers with the convenience of an automatic with the sporty precision of a stick shift.

Maximum performance

The power plant in the gasoline Chevrolet Captiva is a 2.4-litre, 16-valve DOHC 4-cylinder engine generating maximum power of 142 PS at 5,200 rpm and 220 nm at 2,200 rpm of torque for a powerful yet smooth ride.

The common rail diesel Chevrolet Captiva has a 2.0-litre, SOHC engine with a turbo intercooler, with maximum output of 150 PS at 4,000 rpm and 310nm at 2,000 rpm of torque.

In addition to the efficient powertrain, the Captiva's suspension set-up features MacPherson struts up front and an independent four-link design in the rear, giving the vehicle excellent road handling as well as a smooth ride.

Driving safely

The weakness of AWD is increased fuel consumption, but not in the Chevrolet Captiva. In normal road conditions, the Chevrolet Captiva operates with only the two front wheels. But when the system identifies a situation where four wheels would be better than two, such as in wet road conditions or rough terrain, the all-wheel-drive system transfers power to the rear wheels in proportions ranging from 50:50, 60:40, or 70:30 depending on the situation. The benefit of this is that Captiva gets much better fuel economy without the trade-off of safety or flexibility when compared to other AWD vehicles.

The Chevrolet Captiva was awarded a four-star quality rating for occupant protection in its category by Euro NCAP (www.euroncap.com), one of the highest regarded safety organizations.

Excellent after-sales service on par with global standards is available through Chevrolet's nationwide dealer network. Customers can be confident with the knowledge that Chevrolet's warranty package of three years or 100,000 km, 24-hour roadside assistance and quality service at 13 Chevrolet dealers throughout the country are protecting them every kilometer they drive.

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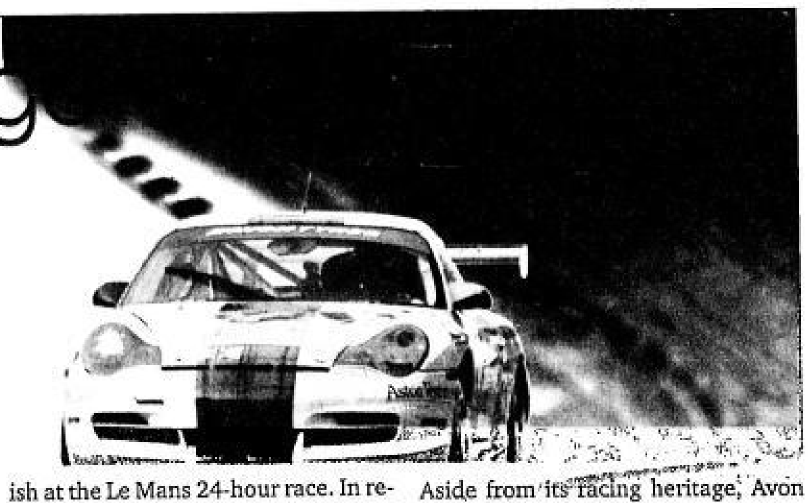
British racing heritage



IN THE REALM OF AUTOMOTIVE racing, particularly in the British GT Championship (BTCC), having the technological edge can spell the difference between victory or defeat. Wheels play an important role as well, because losing your grip on a crucial lap or corner of a race can lead to catastrophic results. This is why, when it comes to performance, racing teams competing in the BGTC trust only one brand, Avon Tires.

Exclusively distributed by Wheel Gallery, Avon tires provide you with an improved level of performance and sophistication derived from racing technology. "The superb grip of the Avon ZZ3 gives drivers plenty of advanced warning to slow down and provide a great feeling of confidence. For skilled drivers in a racetrack environment, this predictability allows them to drift their car around corners at and beyond the limit of the tire's grip," explains Sammy Liuson, president of Wheel Gallery. Avon Tires Motorsport supplies tires to over 150 racing championships around the world. There's no tougher arena for a tire than motorsport and Avon Tires has been at the front of the grid for more than 40 years. Avon Tires is now the title sponsor and control tire supplier of the prestigious British GT Championship. Known as the Avon Tires British GT Championship, the race features marques such as Aston Martin, Ferrari, Lotus, Morgan, Mosler, Panoz and Porsche.

The company can trace its sports car roots back to the 1959 World Championship when Stirling Moss led the Aston Martin team to the title, including a dominant 1st and 2nd finish at the Le Mans 24-hour race. In recent years, Avon Tires has been used to secure many championship victories in World Sportscar C2, FIA SR2 and ALMS SR2.

Owned by the Cooper Tire & Rubber Company, Avon utilizes Cooper technology and undergoes the same stringent quality and testing requirements set by European standards. Aside from its racing heritage, Avon Tires is an OEM equipment of British Car Companies such as Rolls Royce, Jaguar, Land Rover and Morgan.

For inquiries on how to improve your car's performance, visit Wheel Gallery at 318 Santolan Road corner M. Paterno, San Juan or call 724-2739 or 726-0965 or log on to www.conceptonewheels.com.

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Ask GIBS

Mechanic-at-large Giby Yalung answers your most pressing automotive problems

Dear Gibs,

My husband recently gave me as an anniversary gift an almost brand new slightly used 2006 Mitsubishi Pajero V6 (gasoline) with less than 10,000 km in the odometer. I love the car because it's sporty, rugged and very powerful, but it eats a lot of gasoline. To make matters worse, the high price of gasoline keeps me from using my "baby" everyday. I usually end up using my 1.6 Honda Civic. I've tried everything to keep the car tuned, but a big engine can only get so much savings vs a diesel Pajero. I don't want to sell the car (I'm not finished with the amortization yet). Is there a way I could save fuel out of this guzzler?

Lorraine

Dear Lorraine,

I would suggest you go with a dual fuel LPG (liquid petroleum gas) alternative fuel system. The system enables you to use LPG (at P25 per liter) and return to using gasoline in case you ran out of LPG. The gasoline tank has a switch over system that is made as a back-up fuel until your next LPG refill. There are many reputable and professional LPG installers out there. Best of all, LPG is clean burning and requires little or no tune ups at all and will actually pay for itself in a few months of use. Thanks for writing.

Gibs

Thule gears up Sorento

GET READY TO HIT THE ROAD AND LOAD up. With years of experience and an extensive research and development program, Thule is the foremost authority when it comes to transportation/luggage solutions for leisure or professional use. Thule's line of roof racks, boxes and bike racks provide reliable, user-friendly product solutions which gives the customers access to the best and widest product range available on the market, with the best conceivable service.

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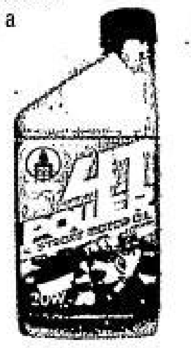
For more information, visit the Thule-EGR showrooms in Ortigas Avenue (744-6367) and Pasong Tamo (892-7847), or log on to www.thule.com.

Seaoil launches new oil for 4-stroke motorcycles

MOTORCYCLES HAVE INVADED THE country's roads, increasing in number every day. To cater to this fast-growing market, Seaoil Philippines has developed a motor oil specifically designed for 4-stroke engines. Called 4T Power, this special lubricant is formulated to meet the demands on 4-stroke motorcycle engines running in a tropical country like the Philippines. It is a blend of high-quality mineral base stocks and performance additives that have been tested in high-revving, high-stress, and high-temperature engines. Seaoil president Glenn Yu said 4T Power has a viscosity rating of 20W50 and follows both the American Petroleum Institute (API) and the Japanese Automotive Standard Organization (Jaso) standards. "4T Power has advanced wear protection, sludge and varnish protection and thermal stability for superior performance-all in a very affordable package," he said. Motor oils such as 4T Power work harder than oil for car engines. 4T Power is now available at all Seaoil stations nationwide for only P145 per liter. For more information, log on to www.seaoil.com.ph.



HYUNDAI SONATA: A symphony of elegance

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THE ideal combination of style and substance in an executive sedan, the Hyundai Sonata is your perfect choice. The Hyundai Sonata combines sophisticated styling, quality and performance. While priced way below the range of the Toyota Camry and the Honda Accord, it is classified by the US EPA as a "Large Car", putting it in a class above its competition.

The Sonata has also been cited as the 2007 Most Ideal Premium Mid-size Car and the 2006 Premium Mid-size Car: AutoPacific 2006 Ideal Vehicle Awards. Prestigious international automobile publications also have recognized the Sonata's excellence in design and performance. The awards include Most Dependable Sedan 2006 from Road and Travel Magazine USA; Executive Car of the Year 2006 from Business Standard Motoring, India; Best Family Sedan from MotorWeek's 2006 Drivers' Choice Awards USA; for Automotive Safety: Popular Mechanics Magazine also cited the Sonata for Excellence for Automotive Safety in 2005.

In the Philippine market, Hyundai offers the Sonata 3.3 GLS AT and the Sonata 2.4 GLS AT. The two variants share the same sleek, refined body with sculpted hood that invites one to take a closer look. Chrome door window and body colored side moldings, in-glass antenna, front fog lamps, projector type front headlamps with black bezel surrounding, clear type side repeaters, rear horizontal bezel strip lamps complete the Sonata look. An ideal executive sedan doesn't get by on looks alone. The Sonata 3.3 GLS is powered by a 3.3-liter V6 engine with Continuous Variable Valve Timing that generates 235 ps at 6,000 rpm and 31 kg-meter of torque at 3,500 rpm. The 2.4 GLS is powered by a 2.4-liter in-line 4 engine with CVVT that packs 161 ps at 5,800 rpm and 22.3 kg-meter of torque at 4,250 rpm. The V6 only comes with a Gate type H-matic 5-speed automatic transmission. The 2.4 GLS comes with a 4-speed Gate type H-matic. Front double wishbone and multi-link rear suspension with anti-roll stabilizers are tuned to provide a good balance of sporty performance and ride comfort.

The Sonata features a well-appointed cabin that provides driver and passengers plenty of room to stretch out and get comfortable in leather seats matching the leather door trims and leather-wrapped steering wheel. The climate within the cabin is controlled by fully automatic air conditioner with Air Quality System featuring air filter and flush type air vent. Ergonomic design and intelligently positioned driver controls put everything well within sight and reach. This is complemented by a driver's seat with eight-way power adjustment. Adding to the convenience are central door locking, power-assisted windows, side view mirrors, overhead sunglass box, glove box with lock, lower side tray, sliding center arm rest with storage bag, shopping bag hook. For entertainment, there's an AM/FM, cassette, and CD/MP3 player with six speakers.

As well as providing great styling and performance, Hyundai is committed to the well-being of everyone who steps into the Sonata. The Sonata is equipped with standard safety features, including state-of-art technologies. These include dual front airbags (plus side and curtain airbags in the 3.3 GLS), Anti-Lock Brake System with Electronic Brake Force Distribution, high mount stop lamps, rear child safety door locks, keyless entry with alarm, and trunk emergency escape system.

The Sonata is exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Hyundai Asia Resources Inc.

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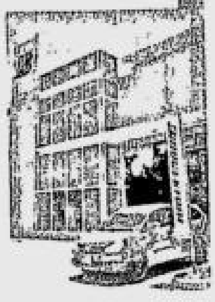

HYUNDAI AZERA: The art of perfection

THE HYUNDAI AZERA IS SETTING new benchmarks in the Philippine luxury car market.

As the flagship passenger sedan of Hyundai, the leading automotive manufacturer in South Korea, the new Azera exhibits European sophistication in styling and engineering.

Its sleek lines and soft curves hide the fact that it is the biggest luxury passenger sedan (4895 mm long, 1865 mm wide and 1490 mm tall) among Asian car marques in the country. It also has the longest wheelbase (2780mm).

The Azera exterior has undergone a makeover to offer class-leading features. These include high-intensity discharge projector type headlamps with black bezel surrounding and headlamp leveling device; front fog lamps; rear combination lamps with horizontal bezel strip lamps; solar control glass, and turn signals on the side view mirror with power folding feature.

The Azera interior offers the sophistication and luxury promised by its exterior. It comes with a leather package that encompasses seats, door trims, console box and steering wheel.

Driver and front passenger enjoy best-in-class power seat adjustments, 10-way adjustments for driver and 4-way for front seat passenger. An Integrated Memory System allows drivers to pre-set favorite seat adjustments to complement side view mirror and tilt-telescopic steering column.

Captains of industry can enjoy a spacious rear cabin with seatbacks with center arm rest and drink holder. There are power outlets for such necessities as laptops and chargers for electronic gadgets.

The Azera comes standard with all the convenience features and amenities found in most top-of-the-line luxury sedans: central door locking, power windows and side view mirrors, dual climate control with an Air Quality System and Filter; 2-DIN AM/FM stereo system with in-dash 6-CD changer that plays MP3 through an Infinity 8-speaker system.

The headlamps turn on automatically in dim or dark surroundings, while wipers turn on when it senses rain.

The Azera is the only passenger car in its class powered by a 3.3-liter V6 24-valve DOHC with CVVT gasoline engine that generates 235 ps at 6,000 rpm and 31 kg-meter of torque at 3,500 rpm.

The engine is mated to Hyundai's 5-speed H-Matic transmission to make the Azera a smooth and powerful ride.

The longest wheelbase and widest front tread in class provide great stability on the drive. The 235/55 R17 tires mounted on 7.0J x 17 inch alloy wheels and 162 mm ground clearance, both class-leading features, add to comfort on all road conditions.

Hyundai has also filled the Azera with most of the safety features expected in a high-end passenger sedan. These include dual front SRS airbags, side (front and rear) and curtain airbags, seatbelts with emergency locking retractors, dual pretensioners, load limiters and height adjusters, keyless entry with alarm, impact-sensing door locks, child safety rear door locks, and high mount stop light.

Active safety systems in the Azera include Anti-lock Brake System with Electronic Brake Force Distribution, and Electronic Stability Program with Brake Assist and Traction Control System.

The Hyundai Azera has a rich history of winning awards and citations from prestigious international automobile publications, industry research institutions, and consumer award-giving bodies.

Among its many awards are Vehicle Satisfaction Award for Large Cars from the AutoPacific 2007 Ideal Vehicle Awards; Highest Rated Car from the AutoPacific 2006 Ideal Vehicle Awards; Most Appealing Large Car from JD Power and Associates 2006 Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (Apeal) Study; Best New Family Car from the 2006 Automobile Journalists Association of Canada (Ajac); Second in Large Car Segment from the JD Power and Associates 2006 Initial Quality Study (IQS); Top Crash Test Ratings from the 2006 Insurance Institute for Highway Safety; Best Luxurious Car for a Non-Luxury Price from the 2006 Forbes.com Best Cars for the Bucks Award.

The New Generation Azera is exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Hyundai Asia Resources Inc.

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Kill Switch

Underbone Undertones

The Sequel

Raymond B. Tribdino

NOW I AM GLAD I CHOSE Google's unlimited e-mail space to host killswitch.roadtalk inbox because from the number of e-mail comments I received after the last Kill Switch, I guess, server burnout would have been the next step.

The forum threads on Motorcycle Philippines (www.motorcycle.com.ph) took about seven or eight pages with comments varying from complete agreement to violently phrased anger for "discrimination against underbones." Some forum responses questioned my statistics, others asked if I was even a rider.

Before we go into this "sequel" for Underbone Undertones, let me clarify a few things.

First, my stats for the 6:1 ratio is simple-total industry volume for cars is just over 100,000 vehicles while for motorcycles it is over 600,000 units. That number may grow to 1 million motorcycles in the next three to six years, as prices go down and specifications improve.

Second, my "90 percent" is an approximation, based on personal observations over a period of several days. I do not say that there is any accuracy in the second figure, but it seems most people who read the column agreed to what I was saying.

This percentage varies however, depending where one is located. In Makati, most riders wear helmets (or what could pass off as some headgear), in my native San Pablo a hard hat seems to be adequate, even to the enforcers. Just a couple kilometers forward, in Sariaya, Quezon, a baseball cap will suffice.

And now for the sequel

One of the prominent e-mail comments to Underbone Undertones (Road Talk, Aug. 28) was that it seemed to have singled out underbones as a scourge on the roads.

"What right do you have to imply that underbone motorcyclists are discourteous, unruly and have no sense of safety?" says opponent2006@gmail.com in brash and crunchy Tagalog.

"You cannot prove what you are saying because it is not true. Motorcyclists are given a bad rap because they are better in getting around traffic. This makes car drivers very envious and angry," comments backride_boy@yahoo.com in really crackling vernacular, with swear words in between.

Far from singling out underbone motorcyclists as road menaces, the article raised valid points that need resolution at the soonest possible time. The real menaces on the road are bus drivers who swerve out of lane, jeepneys that stop where they want, even pedestrians who jaywalk along Edsa dodging speeding cars and, you guessed it, underbones.

All motorcyclists should embrace the thinking that they are road ambassadors. They should lead the way in showing what road courtesy is and that it matters in keeping things sane and safe on the road. Riders should not think that cars (they disaffectionately call "cagers") as enemies on the road. Motorcyclists should pay a lot of attention to safety for the simple reason that they are more vulnerable than any of the other motorized road users.

We cannot-probably can never-depend on government to change the situation. From license application to road laws enforcement, there are just too many motorcyclists to watch over and too many opportunities to keep one eye shut. Motorcyclists can easily blame government for its ineptness in issuing licenses but has it looked into its ranks and discipline it?

I noticed that most motorcyclists who are members of a motorcycle or scooter club are far more disciplined and civilized than those who are not. The reason for this attitude is I guess fraternizing with its clubs members and adherence to its laws, which includes, in most cases, compliance to the laws of the land, especially on safety.

A challenging solution

Here is the real challenge. From one point of view, one can say the problem of motorcycle rider safety (especially for underbones) is the fault of the motorcycle makers. Suddenly making it affordable to have personal transportation, and the freedoms that come with it, also caused the concerns outlined in the previous Underbone Undertones.

As a result, I leave the challenge to the motorcycle makers to help change this situation by offering motorcycle safety training to each buyer of underbones. Sounds far-fetched? Not if you consider that the main business of providing personal freedom like a motorcycle is ruled by the freedoms and rights of others.

Motorcycle priced car

During the last Tokyo Motor Show I attended a press conference with the chair of Renault-Nissan group Carlos Ghosn. He mentioned the most interesting thing: the creation of a car priced at $2500 to $3000. This car is intended to hit the mass market-including those who want to graduate from a motorcycle to a brand new car.

I wonder when this motorcycle replacement car will come and what changes in personal mobility will it bring?

For your comments, reactions and suggestions e-mail: killswitch.roadtalk@gmail.com.

Lube up, wash up

AS A WAY OF EXPRESSING ITS GRATITUDE FOR ITS CUSTOMERS' unwavering support, Speedlab offers a limited promo of getting a free Wash 'n Wax with every oil change. "It is our way of thanking the customers for their patronage and trust with our shop," says Sidney Ang, managing partner of Speedlab. World-renowned Formula 113 from Wax Daddy gives customers a patented one-step yet complete car wash and wax formula which cuts down washing and waxing time drastically. See for yourself how Formula 113 removes the dirt and grime of your car with every oil change at Speedlab by purchasing any of the following 100-percent fully synthetic oils: Motul, Eneos, Liquimoly and Royal Purple. Call 376-4648 or log on to www.speedlab.com.ph.

The car ozonator odor remover

THE TRADITIONAL WAYS TO REMOVE FOUL ODOR HAVE BEEN to use synthetic scents and harsh, chemical sprays at the expense of the environment and health. This "band-aid remedy" leaves much to be desired as harmful germs still remain. Electromex is the only Ozone generator manufacturer in the country that builds high-capacity ozonators guaranteed to remove any kind of foul odors emanating from cigarette smoke, wet paint, septic spills, wet garbage, to mildew, wet carpet, and even from hospitals. No germ, no smell. There is an Electromex Air Ozonator for every size and need depending on the requirements and application of the customer. Electromex ozonators can outperform any other ionizer, even the 2-in-1 low output ozonators, or your money back. Ozone is safe for humans, unlike muriatic acid, alcohol, chlorine and other hazardous toxic chemicals. For more information, call 531-6782 or 535-9069, or log on to www.electromexinc.com.

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THE ISUZU Global D-Max 4x4 at scenic Tagaytay Highlands.

Isuzu showcases Global D-Max with 'metal-to-pedal challenge'

ISUZU PHILIPPINES CORP HELD THE "Isuzu Global D-Max Metal-to-the-Pedal Challenge" Oct. 8 at the Tagaytay Highlands as part of its effort to continuously promote the hardworking pickup. The event comprised of two main activities for its media participants: the Global D-Max ride and the mountain bike competition. The day was capped with a special sneak preview of the Global D-Max 4x4 model.

Known for its advocacies on tourism and the environment, IPC once again veered from the usual fare of vehicle test drive by incorporating a mountain bike challenge into the event. The diesel expert wanted to show the public that the award-winning and best-selling Global D-Max goes beyond commercial or business use, it's also ideal for lifestyle and recreational activities.

Speaking before the press, IPC president Keiji Takeda pointed out the Filipino market's relationship with the D-Max. "People at Isuzu would like to show off that the D-Max is the leading pickup in Thailand, the second largest pickup market in the world," he said. "But we at IPC would like to point out that the D-Max is the sentimental favorite among Filipino pickup users. I believe Filipinos have continuously trusted the D-Max for its power, durability, reliability and fuel-efficiency."

IPC shows that the award-winning and best-selling Global D-Max goes beyond commercial or business use, it's also ideal for lifestyle and recreational activities.

> 'The event participants were also shown the much-awaited 4x4 version of the Global D-Max. To be officially launched soon'

Takeda was referring not only to the D-Max's overwhelming popularity in Thailand, in which it has already sold more than 500,000 units in just a little over three years, but also to the recognition bestowed by Filipinos upon it, including three consecutive years of being "Pickup of the Year" in the Auto Focus People's Choice Awards.

Earlier this year, IPC introduced the Global D-Max, which is now powered by a 3.0-liter 4JJ1 I-TEQ common-rail direct-injection diesel engine with turbo intercooler that produces a maximum output of 146ps at 3,800rpm and a maximum torque of 294 Newton-meters at 1,400rpm to 3,400rpm. It also has a new six-hole grille design and a height increase of 25 mm.

During its launch, the Global D-Max was initially available only in its 4x2 version, but with three variants: the LT base model, the LX midrange model and the LS high-end model. The LX and the LS have the above-mentioned CRDi diesel engine, while the LT has the 2.5-liter 4JA1-L direct-injection diesel engine.

The LS and the LX boast torsion bar springs and stabilizer bar for front suspension; Flex Ride semi-elliptical leaf springs; 16-inch aluminum wheels; black leather steering wheel; new chrome rear bumper and side stepboard design; new crystal lens rear combination lamp; projector-type headlamps; Optitron-type instrument panel; six audio speakers; sports jersey/fabric combination for the seats; keyless entry; power and central door locks; power windows; and power side mirrors.

The high-end LS also features a Pioneer in-dash CD/MP3 player with USB and iPod connectivity, dual airbags and antilock brakes.

The event participants were also shown the much-awaited 4x4 version of the Global D-Max. To be officially launched soon, the Global D-Max 4x4 adds off-road versatility to all the value-for-money features found on the 4x2 model.

The team of Vernon Sarne (editor in chief, Top Gear), Paulo Subido (associate editor, Top Gear), and Matt Mallari (cameraman, "Motoring Today"/"Auto Focus") emerged as the event champion after topping the D-Max component and placing third in the mountain bike component. The winning team took home all three mountain bikes that were used in the contest. In second place was the team of Anjo Perez (assistant motoring editor, Manila Bulletin), Charles Buban (motoring reporter, Philippine Daily Inquirer), and Bam Olivares (motoring columnist, Daily Tribune). Finishing third overall was the team of Ron de los Reyes (host/producer, "Auto Review"), Ronald Rey de los Reyes (reporter, "Auto Review"), and Andy Sevilla (motoring/sports columnist, Business Mirror).

The Isuzu Global D-Max Metal-to-the-Pedal Challenge was sponsored by Spyder Optics, Thule, EGR and Blade. All participants used a pair of Spyder Optics sunglasses for optimum performance in tackling the physical challenges under the glaring heat of the sun.

"We at Isuzu would like to thank our valued customers who have made the wise choice of driving a Global D-Max," IPC corporate business vice president Art Balmadrid said. "I would like to invite those who have not yet driven a Global D-Max to visit any one of our 20 authorized dealerships nationwide and take it for a spin. I have full confidence that you will come to appreciate what made the Global D-Max such a popular and successful pickup not just in the Philippines but also around the world."

PARTICIPANTS during the mountain bike challenge using the Isuzu Global D-Max pickup.

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HCPI turns 17

HONDA CARS PHILIPPINES Inc (HCPI) celebrates 17 years of passionate dedication in providing world-class products and services to the local market. Over the years, Honda has been one of the key manufacturers that have played an integral part in the Philippine automotive industry.

Ever grateful of the market's unceasing support, HCPI marks its 17th year of operations by affirming its commitment to the protection and conservation of the environment. HCPI has inaugurated its Tree Museum located in its manufacturing plant in Sta. Rosa. Led by HCPI president and general manager Hiroshi Shimizu, together with the regional executive director of DENR Eduardo Prinsipe, the establishment of the Tree Museum creates a special place where Philippine indigenous trees can flourish. Narra, molave, cupang and ilang-ilang trees are just sample varieties that will eventually loom around the area. In due time, this Tree Museum will turn into a park heartily cultivated and nurtured by HCPI associates.

Apart from preparing a special home for Philippine indigenous trees, HCPI and its suppliers have turned over used batteries for proper treatment and disposal. Now on its second year, HCPI has partnered with ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay Baterya program for proper recycling and eradication of lead pollutants in the environment. Used batteries contain lead and sulfuric acid components that are corrosive, hazardous to humans and toxic to aquatic life. Bantay Baterya program reprocesses junk lead-acid batteries into fresh raw materials for the production of new batteries.

Honda continues to strengthen its environmental conservation efforts through development and application of environmentally sound products and manufacturing operations. More than high quality and fun-to-drive, Honda vehicles are engineered to comply with the stringent European Emission Standards. Euro standards set the acceptable limits of exhaust particle emissions of new vehicles. All Honda vehicles are Euro 4 compliant even if Philippine regulations only mandate Euro 1 compliance.

Honda recognizes the importance of harmonious co-existence with the community and the environment, particularly in the areas where it operates. As reflected in its manufacturing process, Honda ensures safe disposal of its waste materials by investing on state-of-the-art Universal Carbonizer and wastewater treatment facilities. The Universal Carbonizer treatment facility uses a special heating procedure to process solid waste into carbon without emitting carbon dioxide. Meanwhile, its wastewater treatment facility thoroughly recycles and decontaminates used water before disposal.

On its 17th year, HCPI affirms its commitment to continuously work hard in creating new values in its products and services.

HONDA
TREE PLANTING
HCPI 17th Anniversary Celebration

PHOTO shows the tree planting in HCPI's Tree Museum. Hiroshi Shimizu, president and general manager of HCPI, and Eduardo Prinsipe, regional executive director of DENR, leads the tree planting activity in the Sta. Rosa manufacturing plant.

Toyota's PC leadership boosted by new Vios

AFTER CELEBRATING A SIGNIFICANT milestone of selling 500,000 units, Toyota Motor Philippines (TMP) achieves another victory by regaining the passenger car market leadership last September. This is largely attributed to the introduction of the All-new Vios, now the country's best selling vehicle. With leadership in both commercial vehicle (CV) and passenger car (PC) segments, Toyota regains the triple crown title, grabbing almost 40 percent market share.

Based on the reports from the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc (Campi), total automotive market reached 10,485 units in September. Toyota sold a total of 4,187 units with 39.9-percent market share.

Toyota also continued to lord over its competitors in the commercial vehicle segment with 2,403 units sold, capturing 36.3 percent of the total CV market of 6,626 units. This can be attributed to the good performance of its CV line-up led by the Innova with 1,014 units sold.

Furthermore, Toyota regained its leadership in the passenger car segment. TMP's PC sales reached its peak in September after the successful introduction of one of its most important production and sales volume model, the All-New Vios. While the total PC market for September reached 3,859 units, Toyota captured a whopping 46.2-percent market share with 1,784 passenger cars sold. Out of which are 1,206 units of the all-new Vios, making it the country's best selling passenger car, followed by the Innova.

In terms of year-to-date sales, TMP likewise continues to be the number one in commercial vehicles, passenger cars, and in overall sales, capturing again the much-elusive Triple Crown Title. Total Toyota CV is at 21,166 units, PC at 10,058 units and overall sales of 31,224 units. Overall, Toyota captured 37.1-percent market share. This brings the number one automotive company closer to its year-end goal. In a statement, TMP president Hiroshi Ito expressed, "We are well on our way on breaking TMP's annual sales record of 41,801 units set last 1996. This will also bring us closer to our goal of achieving 40-percent market share for the year. But we are not on a rush to set new milestones, we will do all this step by step, day by day, one happy customer at a time."

With Toyota's overwhelming success as evidenced by the September and year-to-date sales dominance, and the recent achievement of its 500,000 sales milestone, Toyota has come a long way since it started 19 years ago. But because for Toyota, there is no best, only better, they will continue to move its products and services forward to help people get more out of life.

> 'TMP likewise continues to be the number one in commercial vehicles, passenger cars, and in overall sales, capturing again the much-elusive Triple Crown Title'

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FASHION LIFESTYLE

Contributing editors Apples Aberin-Sadhwani and Jenni Eppersen support the fight against breast

Paradise found

Story on page C2

RETRO print-jersey jumpsuit with overdress

IN THIS ISSUE

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Lingerie for the holidays /C4

Fab Halloween getups /D2

Gap's Manila debut /D1

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APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

PATRICE RAMOS-DIAZ IS POSSIBLY one of the most in-demand designers in Manila nowadays. Besides catering to countless brides who seek her expertise and gentle guidance, she is also setting up her soon-to-open boutique in Greenbelt 5 called Paradi (for the first two letters of her first, middle and last names).

Seemingly quiet and shy, which can sometimes be misinterpreted as being aloof and stand-off-ish, the soft-spoken designer is actually an interesting conversationalist who is insightful and well-versed in many different aspects of her craft.

We caught up with her one weekend morning in her well-appointed atelier, to give you, our readers, a better idea of yet another Filipino designer who makes us proud.

How and when did you get started in the industry?

It was really by accident. I had a salon because I loved doing makeup. I was confused then. I took up Fine Arts but there were too many things I wanted to get into. I wanted to paint. I also wanted to get into interiors.

But then, opportunity came so I opened a salon. I learned also how to cut and color. So my direction then was beauty and my goal was to open several salons.

But there was still that itch I needed to scratch. So, I found myself sketching clothes every day. Until one day, a friend invited me to join the Mega competition. I did and I placed first runner-up in 1997. The winner then, Raul Ramirez, was overaged for the Singapore competition, so they had to send me.

Suddenly I found myself in Singapore in an elevator with Suzy Menkes. I didn't even know who she was until one of the designers told me "That's Suzy Menkes of International Herald Tribune." So, I was shaking. My God, she was one of the judges.

The judging for that competition was pretty tough because there was pre-judging. In front of a panel, you had to explain your concept and defend it. Then, they looked at the clothes inside and out. So, it was scary.

It was also enriching. I learned a lot. In that span from the Mega competition to the Singapore experience, by the time I came back, I felt I learned so much already and it prepared me for what came next, which was invitations to do shows, to do photo shoots and eventua
shop.

What's your design phi

I get inspired by materi
that's the take off point.
it's just a matter of seeing
ing something from just a
ject, a form, or a shape o
and then an idea springs t

Usually my light-bul
happens at night. And so
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sleep with a sketchpad be
before I go to bed, I'm usu
ing. Maybe that's why I d
designs.

At this point, what wou
is the defining moment
reer?

Actually, I feel like I'
Maybe I've yet to mature.
I'm in that stage. From da
just doing my thing; I g
business the way I've be
But unconsciously, ma
some pressure because ne
are cropping up and we h
way to distinguish oursel
new ones. You have to so
vate yourself and find wa
marketable.

In more concrete o
ways, how do you do tha

Recently, I've tried to
as a brand. I'm detached
the person, the designer.
tive now is Patrice, as the
I'm more conscious of t
and the flavor of that bran

The consciousness jus
cently, when I started to
brand, then it became n
identify my vision. Othe
wouldn't be conscious. Yo
designing and creating, w
specific plans.

What's that vision for
brand?

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also to find meaning oth
plain design.

Just like what you did
abaca stuff?

Yes. It could be anythin
covering beauty in a m
helping weavers by giving
ness, or it could be in wha
way I can help.

What's the big chun
market right now? Are th

For now brides because
Salcedo is actually a brida
I'm still in the process of e
total concept, because the
mentioned, to treat
brand—Patrice Bridal. I wa
a place for brides to explor
to fit samples, to be able t
materials.

Ninety-nine percent of
first-time brides. More oft
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ing a gown.

It's that one dress they'
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East of Eden
Beige cotton gauze draped empire dress

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that this is a special place where they can fit, and not only look at gowns, but maybe see other several other things that will complement their gowns, like veils, accessories, shoes.

Are you going to help them plan their weddings along the way?

I'm taking baby steps. My first goal is to launch my made-to-measure line. Made-to-order has been there for the past 10 years since I started.

Define made-to-order as opposed to made-to-measure.

Made-to-order is special design, very personalized service, it's really one-on-one with me, catering to the very specific needs of a bride. Versus made-to-measure where I can create a collection based on my own aesthetics, and the identity of my brand. The starting point is me, which is the opposite of made-to-order where the bride comes and tells me what she wants.

So that's like Vera Wang?

Exactly like the business models from the states where you enter the showroom, fit a gown, order what you want. Then, we have room to customize it if you want a specific gown in a different material like lace, or different color. And we can also accommodate if you want to add embellishment or what-have-you.

But what's nice about made-to-measure is it's half the price of couture. So the initial goal there is to make well-designed gowns in good material more accessible.

I'm doing a 20-piece collection initially and then I'll add. I'll do two collections a year. I'm going to sell some off the rack, which is even cheaper than made-to-measure. The key really is that I'm setting up the structure and organization for the made-to-measure.

Any other current projects?

I'm opening a store in Greenbelt 5.That will be my luxury resort wear, the type of clothes you can wear to special occasions as an option to your typical cocktail dress or gown.

It's a small store but it offers the market an alternative to special occasion clothing. These days, I noticed that certain events require not so formal and yet dressed-up and chic clothing so I'm trying to cater to that need.

What are the price points?

I'll have special one-of-a-kind pieces that can be anywhere from P7,000-P10,000. I'm going to have abaca tops also there, which I will sell from P4,000-P5,000, and the lower would be around P800-P2,500 but these are separates. This time, I'm going back to enjoying the process of designing.

What are other things you'd like to do, design-wise?

After doing my last exhibit, I want to start exploring art again. I tried to go back to painting three years ago but it was impossible if you have deadlines plus the schedule of the kids. Now, I feel that that's another platform for me to explore, which can cross the boundaries of fashion. I can enjoy both worlds. It doesn't have to be this or that.

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

Fleur et feuille
Yellow curry duchess satin with embossed floral appliqué

Photography Jun de Leon
Styling Millet Arzaga
Model Girlie Benitez /PMAP
Makeup Lourd Ramos/
Emphasis Salon Rockwell
using Smashbox Cosmetics,
available at Beauty Bar.
Photo assistance Aldrin Convocar,
Ramon Ty, Joseph Grego
Image manipulation
Adan Convocar/Wings Photography
Hair/makeup assistance
Lizette & Rovie /
Academy of Beauty & Arts
Accessories Girlie Benitez
Clothes Patrice Ramoz Diaz,
Unit 103 Three Salcedo Place,
121 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village,
Makati (tel. 8841543)
Soon to open: Paradi boutique,
Greenbelt 5
Quick Tan Airbrush Tanning on model
Girlie by Belo Medical Center,
The Podium, Ortigas, Pasig
Thanks to Kim and Fely Atienza
for the reptiles provided for the shoot.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5260 Series of 2007.

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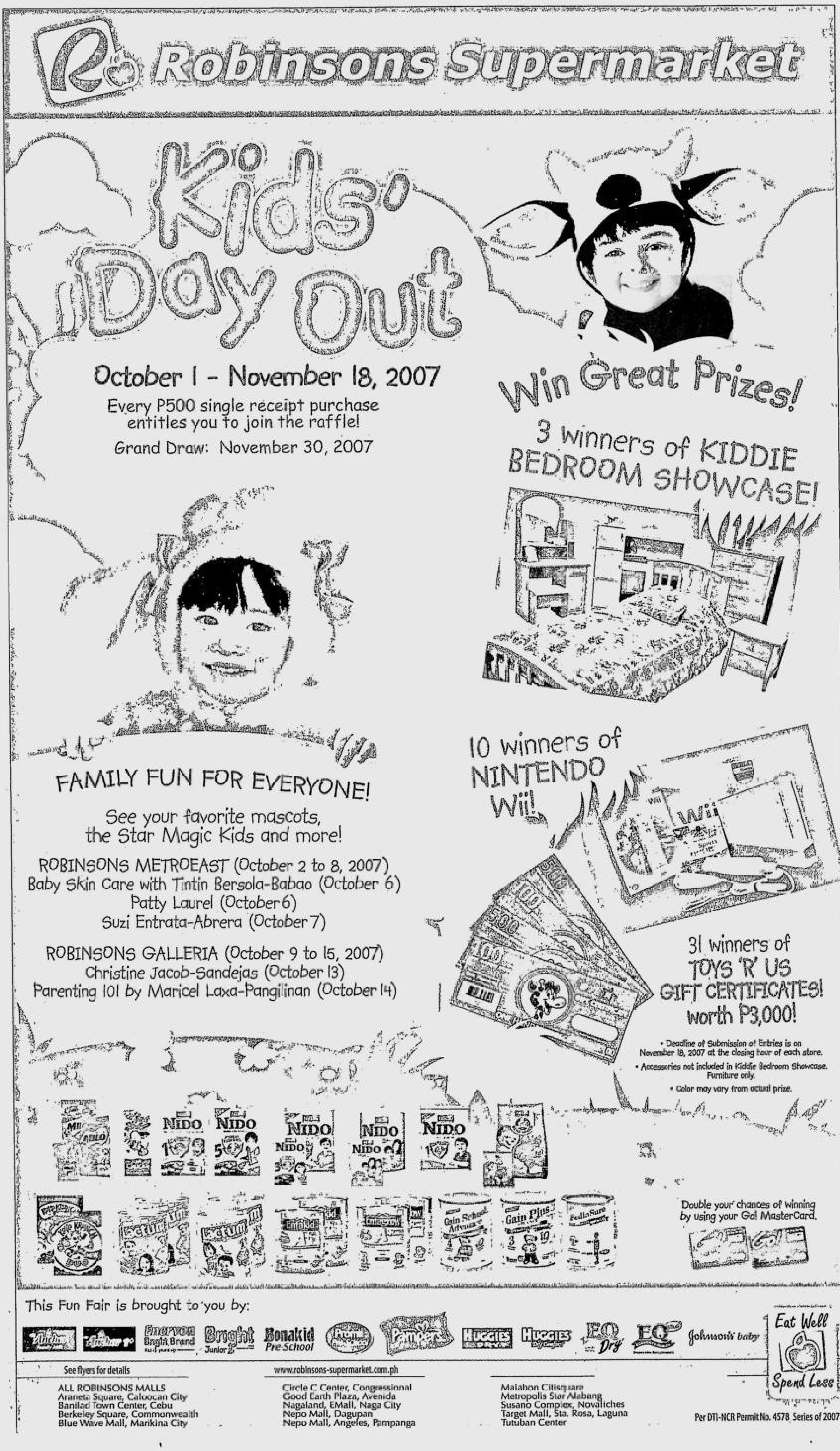
AVON Fashions' Holiday and Pre-Spring collection

Love, loyalty and lingerie



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10 winners of NINTENDO Wii!

31 winners of TOYS 'R' US GIFT CERTIFICATES! worth P3,000!

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- Color may vary from actual prize.

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Metropolis Star Alabang
Susano Complex, Novaliches
Target Mall, Sta. Rosa, Laguna
Tutuban Center

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4578 Series of 2007

Avon Fashions sells an astounding 44,000 bras to Filipinas daily. This season, loyal customers can expect very sexy intimate apparel from the brand

By Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Ryan Lim

WHEN SARAH MCINTOSH FIRST MOVED to the Philippines, she found it a curious but pleasant surprise to meet Filipinas who reach into their blouse collars to reveal their Avon bra straps upon learning that the Englishwoman worked with the direct-selling firm.

But after living here for 18 months, McIntosh has become familiar with Filipinas' loyalty to Avon undergarments. McIntosh, Avon marketing director for Southeast Asia cluster, said the brand sells a staggering 44,000 bras across the country daily, making it the No. 1 in this segment, not just among direct-selling brands but in the total undergarments business.

The immense popularity of Avon Fashions is unique to the Philippines, said McIntosh, as the brand presented its latest collection in Crowne Plaza last week. Everywhere else in the world, she added, Avon is synonymous to cosmetics.

Heritage and credibility

"Avon Fashions has had 14 years of history in the Philippines," McIntosh said. "It's intimate apparel that's designed for the Asian woman and, at the time [when it started], it was a great new concept. Now customers are loyal to the brand. They know it fits and they can trust the quality. Avon has the heritage and the credibility in its beauty products that [people think] if we had intimate apparel, we would put the same kind of research and quality into them."

McIntosh also believes Avon Fashions' attractive prices have kept it at the top. "It's about choice, quality and prices. There's something for every consumer need and occasion."

"Avon Fashions started with Gentle Fashions," recalled Raquel Ruiz, Avon category manager for intimate apparel in Southeast Asia. "It meant that if Avon was gentle on your skin and face, it was also gentle [on your body]."

Now, Filipinas also go for variety, added Ruiz. Avon makes it a point to come up with a new style every two weeks, constantly introducing new fabrics and colors. But it has also been prudent in keeping its bestsellers, the basic lines in solid black, white and beige. It updates customer favorites like the cleavage-enhancing line with underwire called Dream Bra by coming up with new materials each season. Shapemakers, the line for plus-size women, and Missy for teens, are also given special consideration.

Holiday trends

Filipinas can expect very sexy styles for the holiday season, with delicate string sets and lingerie strings revealed as part of a woman's outfit. Deep greens and blues are the shades to go for, Ruiz suggested. In the first quarter of 2008, pastels and laces will dominate the woman's boudoir.

Apart from being knowledgeable with trends, Filipinas also know a lot about underwear fits and shapes, McIntosh said. And she believes Avon plays a big part in that.

"Our brochures explain fit... The five different styles for the straps, where to wear it, that kind of thing. You're unable to do that in retail, you just see the bras hanging in the racks. Now women understand about convertible straps, racerback... Education is a big part of our brochures. It teaches how to measure oneself to find the correct size of bra. About two-thirds of women in the world wear the wrong size of bra. So we also educate dealers so they're able to give advice."

She added, "When you are in the right kind of intimate apparel, you kind of know you'll feel okay the whole day. If it fits you right, you know you're going to look right."

FASHION
LifeStyle

LUCY Liu, actress, wears The Little Black Sweater Dress

DAVIS Guggenheim, director and producer, wears The Perfect V Sweater

N Mayer, musician, we The Sweater Vest

Filling the gap

CLASSIC AMERICAN BRAND GAP IS SET to open in Manila on Nov. 15, thanks to Casual Clothing Specialists, Inc (CCSI), a new company within the Rustan Group of Companies and a sister company of Store Specialists, Inc. (SSI). CCSI is the local licensee behind Gap and the soon-to-open Banana Republic.

INQUIRER Fashion had the chance to chat with CCSI and SSI executive vice president Anton Huang on this latest fashion development.

Why did you decide to bring in Gap?

Well, we've been talking to Gap for many years now and unfortunately when we started talking to them, they weren't really ready for international expansion yet. But in the recent past, they've started to do so through franchising arrangements.

It was last year that they opened in the Middle East, and then they did Singapore also. And we said, okay, now that you're doing international expansion, can we restart discussions, and they were happy to do so. In a very, very short span of time, we reached an agreement and here we are.

In terms of the opportunity, it's a great classic casual brand and that's what its heritage is, that's what its DNA is. The Philippine consumer, as you very well know, is a classic casual consumer. Some of them are becoming more and more fashionable, but at the end of the day, the Philippine culture also dictates the fact that our heritage is always casual and classic. Gap, I think, will fill in that market quite effectively.

At what price points? Aren't the pieces too casual and too ordinarily basic for expensive price points?

Not necessarily. If you look at Marks and Spencer, for example, and even Celio, which is not our brand but is a friendly competitor, both brands are casual classic brands but their price points are still very reasonable.

So, Gap's price points will fall within the Marks and Spencer range of prices?

It will be competitive with the brands that are in its segment.

Don't you think Gap is beyond its prime?

Yes and no. A lot of brands go through brand life cycles, right? The great thing is, admittedly, Gap went through its downside but just like other great brands, it has gone back up. You talk about Burberry, Marks and Spencer and the like, and Gap is doing that.

In fact, if you look at Gap's performance this year, its profitability is up 19 percent, its stock price is up also by the same percentage point, and it now has Patrick Robinson (Gap's newest executive vice-president who will oversee all elements of design for Gap's women's and men's apparel, accessories and intimates line in North America), who's been very well accepted. The brand's doing a fantastic job and it's seen in the numbers.

Fashion and design-wise, how will it compete with the other brands? Will it remain just truly classic or will it branch out to other things like what H&M is doing?

I'm not part of the brand's design team, but from what we've seen and what we've

FILLING/ D4

CCSI executive vice-president Anton Huang

BOOTS' DEVOTION TO ST. THÉRÈSE GAVE
THE ROA FAMILY GREAT COMFORT IN LIFE AND IN DEATH.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MR. OEL RAZON

Boots Anson-Roa kissing the urn which contains the cremains of Pete Roa.

St. Thérèse® Columbarium
A Comfort from Life's Thorns

IN MY HEART OF HEARTS, I KNOW THAT IT WAS ST. THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS WHO HELPED EASE PETE'S PAIN AS WELL AS OURS. "GOD'S LITTLE FLOWER" GAVE US THE STRENGTH AND COMFORT TO EMBRACE PETE'S SUFFERING AND EVENTUALLY HIS DEATH.

IT WAS PETE'S WISH TO HAVE HIS CREMAINS LAID TO REST IN THE ST. THÉRÈSE COLUMBARIUM LOCATED WITHIN THE CONFINES OF HER SHRINE.

FULFILLING HIS WISH HAS FILLED US NOT ONLY WITH JOY AND PEACE IN OUR HEARTS, BUT ALSO WITH GREAT COMFORT IN KNOWING THAT OUR BELOVED PETE, IN LIFE AND IN DEATH, IS IN THE LOVING CARE AND PROTECTION OF MY DEAR ST. THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS – "THE GREATEST SAINT OF MODERN TIMES".

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A CELEBRATION OF LIFE AND LOVE

Testimonies from Ms. Boots Anson Roa on the demise of her husband Mr. Pete Roa

"When Pete was bedridden due to his stroke and cancer, a very close friend of ours lent me a relic of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and advised me to place it at Pete's bedside. I have been a devotee of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus since my high school years and I continue to believe in her. I always find comfort every time I pray to her. I hoped Pete would find comfort in her too.

"During Pete's final six months, he took pains to pray the Novena to Padre Pio every day at dawn. I would join him and later continue to pray the Novena to St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus. It was Pete's last expressed wish that his death be a "quick and timely demise" and that his cremains be laid to rest at the Shrine of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus Columbarium. But we added that it had to be according to God's Will and His "Time and Motion" plans, not ours.

"After several confinements in the ICU, Pete's attending physicians recommended that a life support system be attached to ensure quality of life for Pete during his remaining days. From both vicarious and personal experiences with departed loved ones, I knew that the protracted application of the respirator could result in a moral dilemma, should the eventual need for a family decision to "pull the plug" arise.

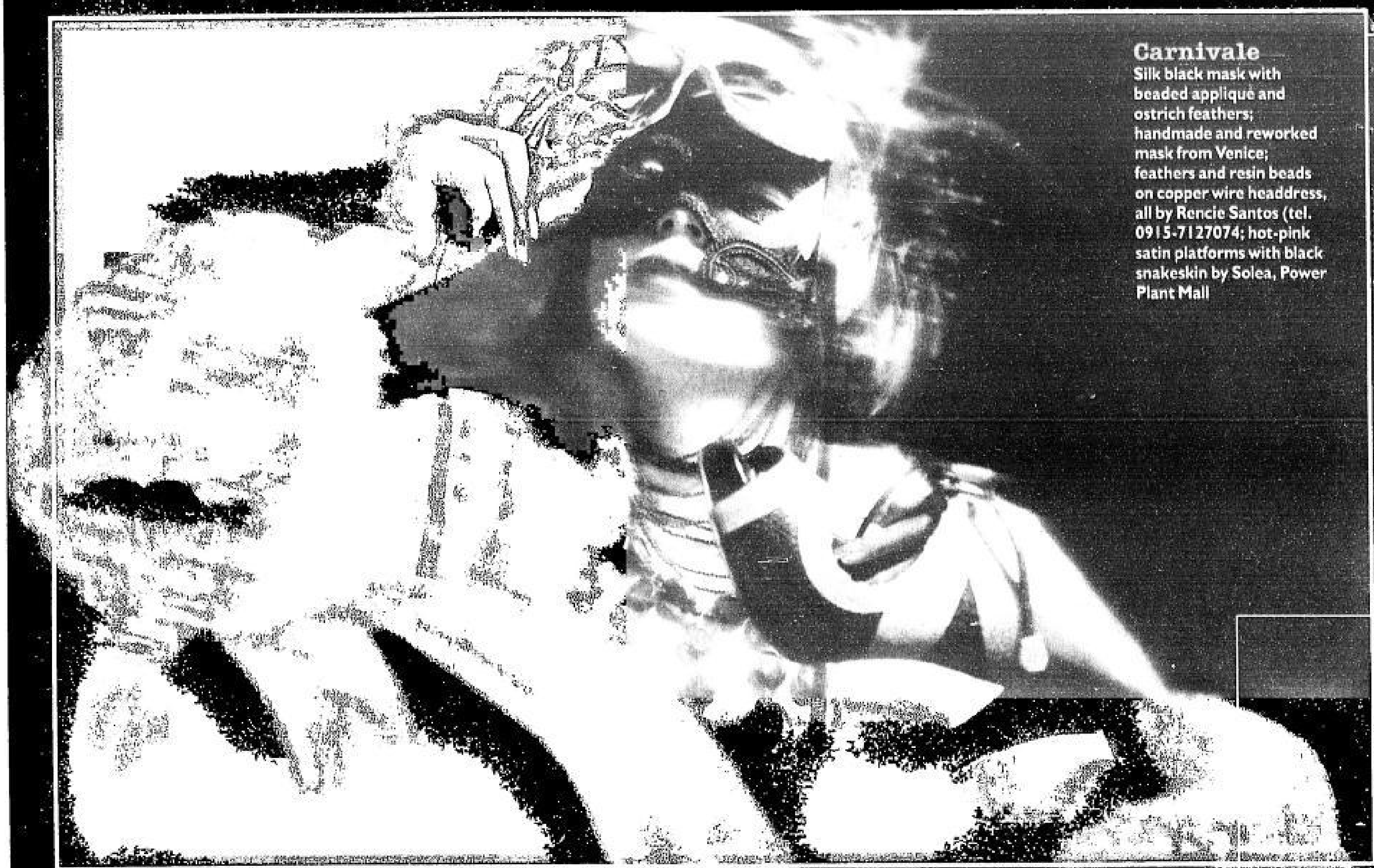
After our family caucuses, I turned to St. Thérèse for help. I prayed for her intercession to help me decide on the use of the life support system for Pete. And if so, to spare our family the awesome challenge of having to decide on whether or not to end its use should the need arise. I begged for a sign from my beloved St. Thérèse. I asked her for white roses to signify the use of the respirator.

I went through the course of a very busy day, shuttling back and forth the ICU in between class at the Ateneo, office work at Mowelfund and taping for the TV series I was in. No sign of roses by dinner time. Then I was asked to return to the TV location site. Lo and behold, white roses in a vase greeted me on the night table of my supposed bedroom set.

I approached the set designer and told him what the white roses meant to me. He replied, "Mam, kung saan-saan na kami naghanap ng Red Roses kasi nga mas maganda ito sa TV. Pero wala kaming makita. Mabuti na lang may available na White Roses. I rushed to Pete's bedside and immediately acceded to the doctors' advice to attach the life support system to him.

The following two days saw Pete's condition deteriorating. His major organs continued to malfunction and his vital signs weakened until cardiac arrest took his life. Even after he had breathed his last, the respirator continued working. The plug was pulled only after he had died. More importantly, Pete joined his Creator with the serenity and peace of one who had nurtured his faith and had surrendered his will to that of the Lord.

My prayer requests were clearly answered. I thank God and my beloved St. Thérèse for this."



Carnivale
Silk black mask with beaded appliqué and ostrich feathers; handmade and reworked mask from Venice; feathers and resin beads on copper wire headdress, all by Rencie Santos (tel. 0915-7127074; hot-pink satin platforms with black snakeskin by Solea, Power Plant Mall

Mad hatter
Neckpiece (worn as headpiec
by Paul Herrera (tel. 0921-781

Masked crusader
Half mask made of aluminum wires and encrust
crystal and silver bars encrusted with stones and

Masquerade!

Whimsy is the name of the game this Halloween

Bird of paradise
Bib necklace made of shells, feathers and barrel beads; armbands with semiprecious stones with metal base; and gold-plated metal rings with brandy citrine crystals and tourmaline crystals, all by Hermin Aslanian for L'Obelisk, Peninsula Manila (tel. 8876812, 8123456 loc. 2982); 6750 Ayala Avenue, Makati; and Rustan's Department Store

Photography Sara Black
Styling Millet Arzaga
Model Nadine Wischer/Topmodels
Makeup Lourd Ramos/Emphasis Salon Rockwell using Smashbox Cosmetics, available at Beauty Bar
Makeup assistance Al de Leon/Academy of Beauty & Arts

Alter ego
Couture jewelry, crown and evening bag from the Silver and Colored series by Gerry Sunga (tel. 0915-4476003, 0918-8288999)

By Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

BOO! HALLOWEEN IS just A couple of days away and if you haven't figured out yet what to wear to any of the happening parties around the metro, we've come up with some fashionably fabulous suggestions for you.

For starters, ditch the Catwoman catsuit, Cleopatra white draped dress and matching wig, and the proverbial vampire and witch wardrobe! It's your chance to get creative, so do think out of that square box.

Our recommendation: go for a bit of drama and romance with bejeweled, feathered, and vibrantly colored accessories and masks that you can easily match with anything from your chic wardrobe.

Think Giacomo Casanova during the carnivals in 18th-century Venezia. Imagine glorious young nobles, all masked revelers, dressed in resplendent robes and finery. Or why not relive the New Orleans Mardi Gras in the late 1800's when the city's elite threw elegant masked balls as wild partying went on in the streets. Then again, why not do a little samba and take your cue from the annual carnivale in Rio de Janeiro where participants donned masks and sometimes nearly nothing else?

A mask, besides lending an air of mystery and arousing excitement, can be dressed up or down depending on your mood and personality. Choose a decadent jewel-encrusted stunner to match with a simple all-black outfit for a strikingly sophisticated Halloween look. Or go for a colorful, sparkly version that you can wear with metallic clothing and body paint for some shock appeal.

If a mask is not your thing, consider piling on the jewels—faux or otherwise—as a stylishly fun alternative. Wear neckpieces as headgear or wear exaggerated chokers with bangles upon bangles and extra-large cocktail rings. Whimsy is the name of the game, after all.

Go for glam and play dress-up this Halloween. With a bit of imagination and derring-do, you'll surely come up with your very own fashionably unique look!

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) of burnt fabric nautilus appliqués with cut beads, sequins and pearls
3655)

with Swarovski crystals, and three-layered bangles made of Swarovski
pearls by Khakai Villanueva (tel. 0905-2788433)

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– Authentic customer statement, 22 March 2007
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It's not easy for hearty eaters to diet. Everyone knows how agonizing it is to deprive yourself of food! It is no less difficult when you're overweight; all that extra weight dangerously accelerates your heart rate, which may put you at risk from heart failure.

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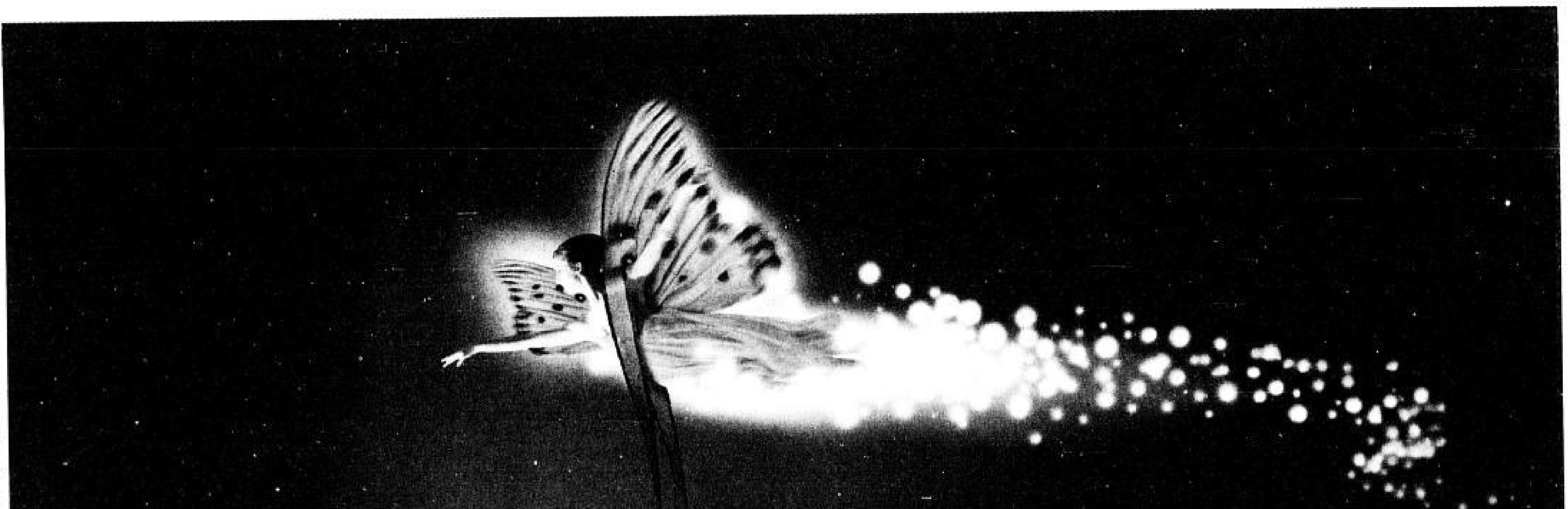

Kids in fantasy costume get in for free.

Spooky Halloween Gathering

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*Open to kids ages 6 to 15. Strictly no bloody or scary costumes please. Registration is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
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See flyers for details. Per DTI-Laguna Permit No. R-09-321. Series of 2007

See flyers for details. Per DTI-Laguna Permit No. 5-09-320 Series of 2007

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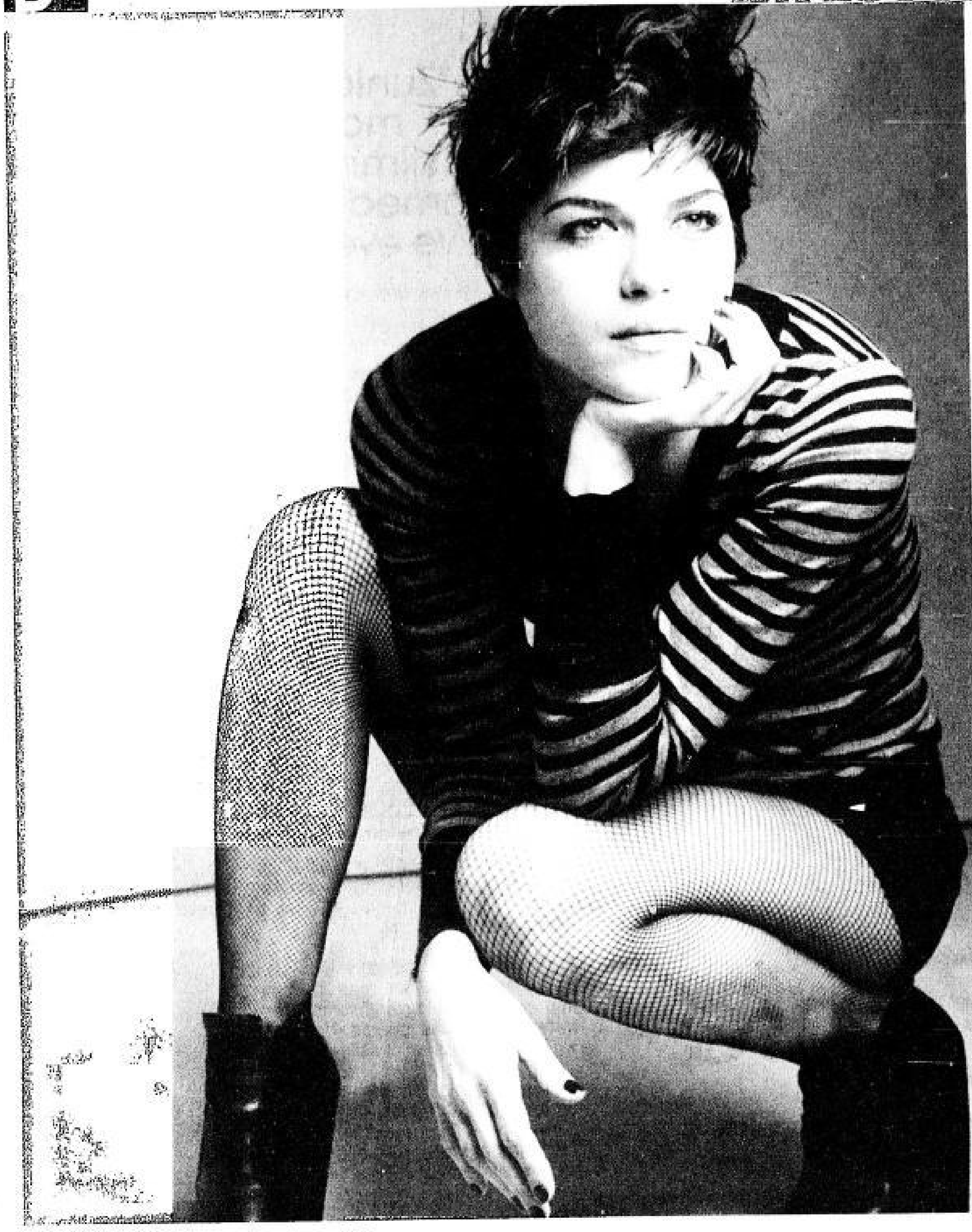


SELMA Blair, actress, wears The Deep V Sweater

KEN Watanabe, actor and producer, wears The Tailored White Shirt

Filling the gap

From page D1

been told, it will focus on the classics. They've been quite clear about that, if I'm not mistaken. And if you look at Gap's ad campaign—the Fall '07 ad campaign—it's entitled Classics Redefined.

Will you carry the whole line?

Yes, we will. We'll be doing men's and ladies, kids and babies. Our first two stores, which will be in Glorietta and TriNoma, will be carrying adult apparel only, so men's and ladies, and the store size is 400 sq m on average.

Are you bringing in the whole Fall/Winter range?

We're starting with Holiday. We will have a complete representation but, of course, we won't be carrying the very thick stuff. But we will have a full representation.

Why didn't you bring in Banana Republic or Old Navy as well?

We will. Banana Republic is opening in April in Greenbelt 5 and inside Rustan's. Old Navy is not yet in the pipeline because it's not going international at the moment. But Banana Republic is something we're very excited about.

Do you think it can be detrimental to Gap that some of the stuff are made in the Philippines?

In terms of being made in the Philippines, most of the products that are made in the Philippines aren't solely made in the Philippines. From a pricing standpoint, it's become difficult for us to sell something made in the Philippines, sent back and then sent over here.

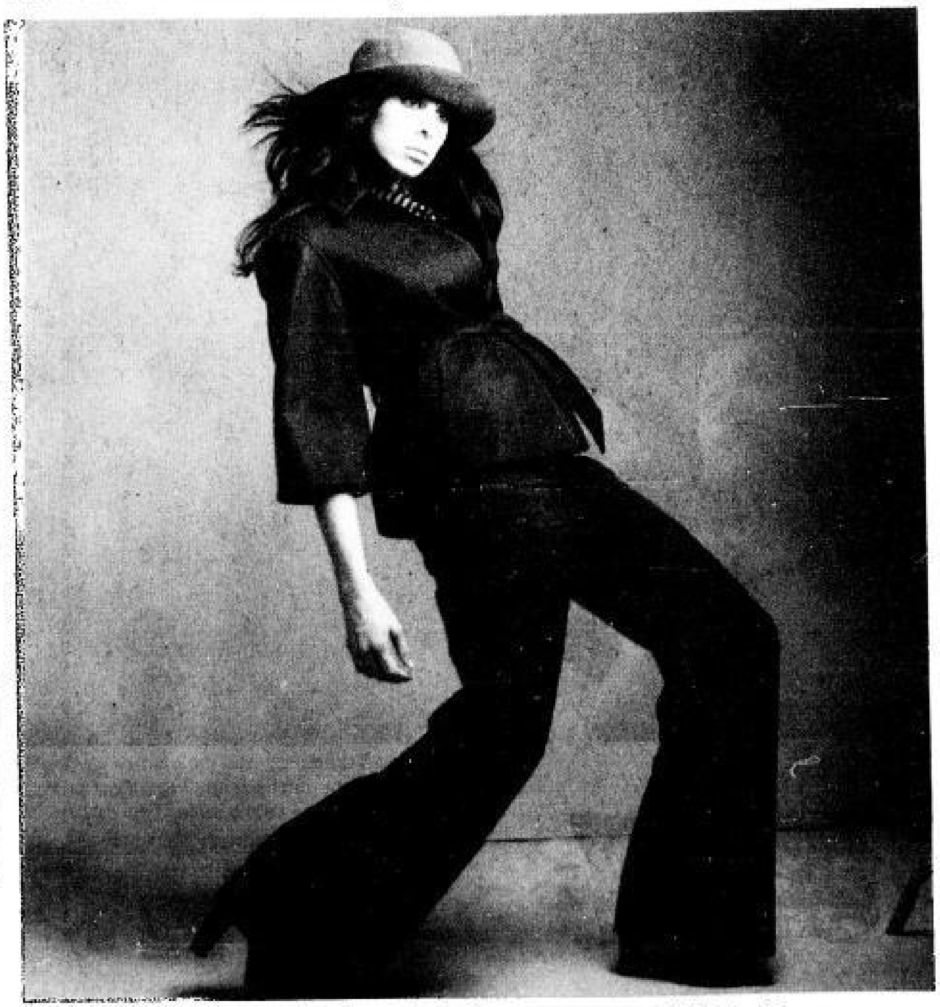
So, what we've done, for the Philippine market in particular, or other Asian markets where Gap is also made, is to source the products closer, not from the Philippines, but from other markets where they are manufactured. So, we won't be carrying the "made in the Philippines products."

Do you think that the Philippine economy is ready for this? You don't think it's too segmented?

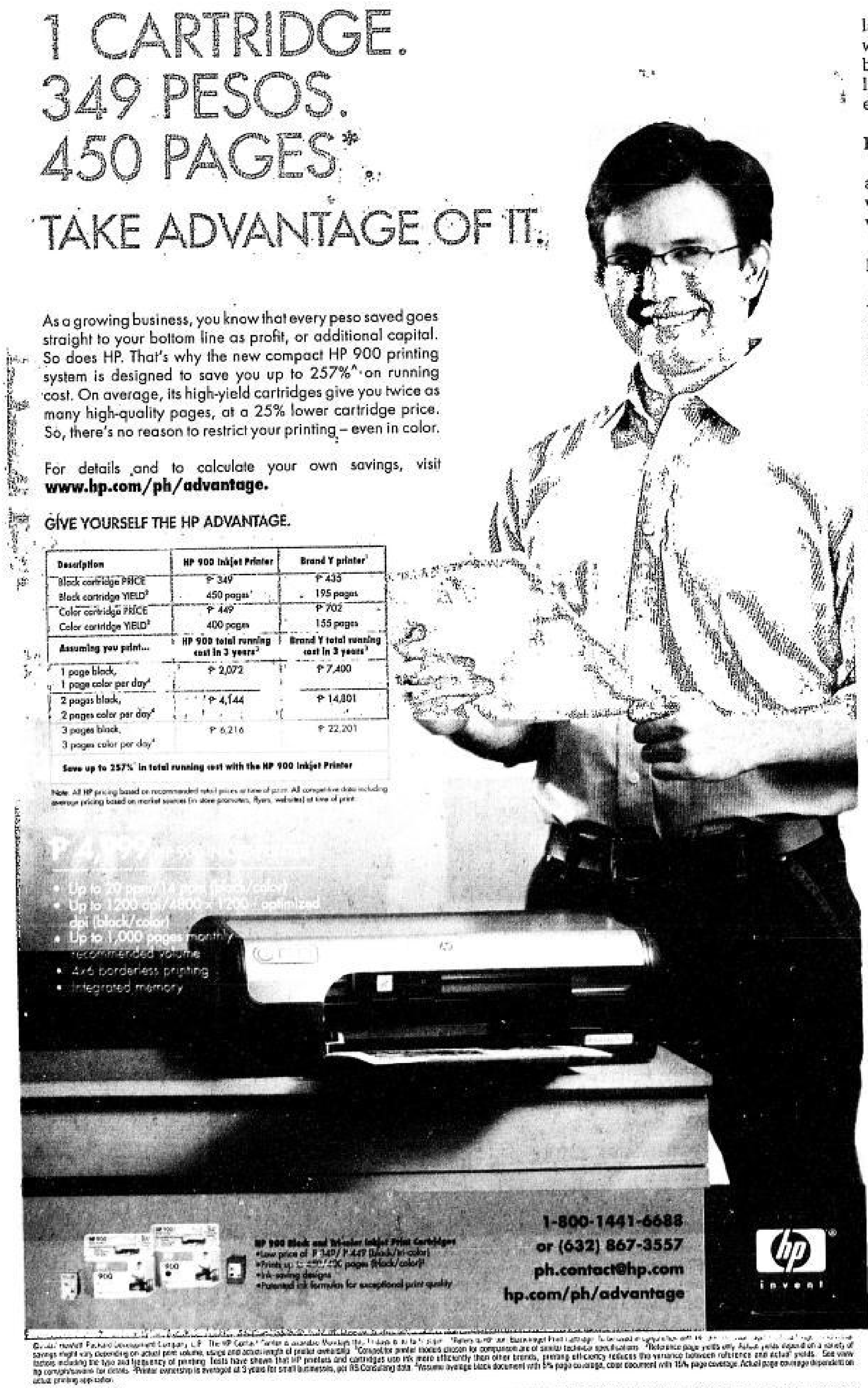
Well, the Philippine economy has been growing steadily over the past few years. There have been better standard mall developments, which have given us the right opportunities to look into these types of products and brands within the shopping malls that we choose, and we feel that the market can still absorb it.

Photos from the Gap "Classics Redefined" Fall 07 campaign

MARCEL Wanders, designer, wears The Soft Tailored Blazer



SARAH Silverman, comedian and aspiring supermodel, wears The Wide Leg Trouser



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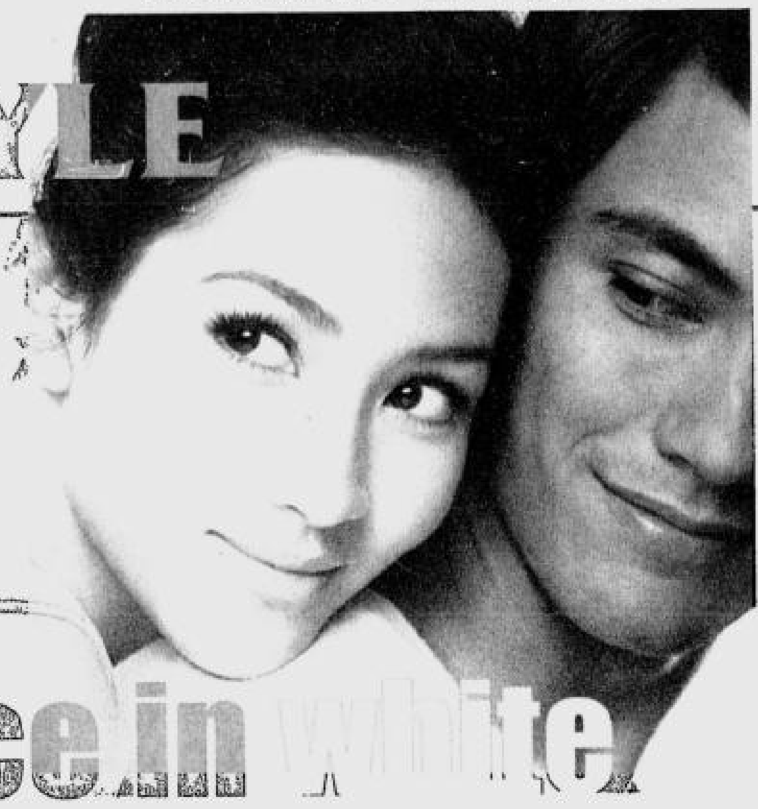
BEAUTY

What makes this new whitening line unique is that it addresses women's desire for clear, blemish-free skin, not paler skin



Romance in white

By Cheche V. Moral

THEIR EYES MEET. IT'S A look of mutual recognition. No words are exchanged, but the silence tells the tale of a love now gone. His gaze follows her as she walks past, catching a glimpse of the pained expression in her eyes, as he is led away by the woman in his arms. A cliffhanger.

The entire room breaks into swoons and silly cries.

It's not a trailer from another sappy Hollywood movie, but the first installment in a series of Pond's TV commercials touting its newest "masstige"—or premium mass market—whitening range. The TVC was previewed to the local media at the launch of Pond's Flawless White this week at The Peninsula Hotel.

For all its claims of high-tech development in cosmetics, it seems Pond's can't be faulted for appealing to the woman's romantic side, or the tried-and-tested beauty-equals-romance tack of product promotion. It gets the kind of attention it aims for. Everyone winds up rooting for the dark-skinned female lead: She *should* use Flawless White to win back her old love! *Everyone* should use Flawless White to find true love!

Clever marketing, no question. The Asian press launch in August at the Pond's Institute in Tokyo, Japan, even concluded with a bridal show by eminent Japanese designer Yumi Katsura.

Passion in technology

But the products really work, insisted Pond's scientists.

"We are in the business to make women more beautiful, not in the business of bulls---," stressed David Steele, global vice president of Pond's. "Our passion is in technology."

What makes this new line unique is that it addresses women's desire for clear, blemish-free skin, not paler skin, according to Samir Singh, Pond's global brand director for skin lightening. "Consumers are no longer interested in '10 times lighter' or that kind of thing, but the quality of lightening. They want no spots and blemishes."

Women surveyed across Asia revealed they preferred retouched photos of their faces that blurred their blemishes over those that showed them with simply paler or whiter skin.

"Technology is only useful if you understand what consumers want," Steele said.

Thus Pond's proceeded to develop a skin-care line that would give women these results, targeting specific Asian facial skin conditions: age or sun spots (solar lentigo), acne scars, melasma, freckles. The result is Flawless White, which features the new VAO-B3 technology.

The VAO-B3 complex consists of Vi-

ROMANCE/ E2

HAND-EMBROIDERED kimono bridal gown by Yumi Katsura

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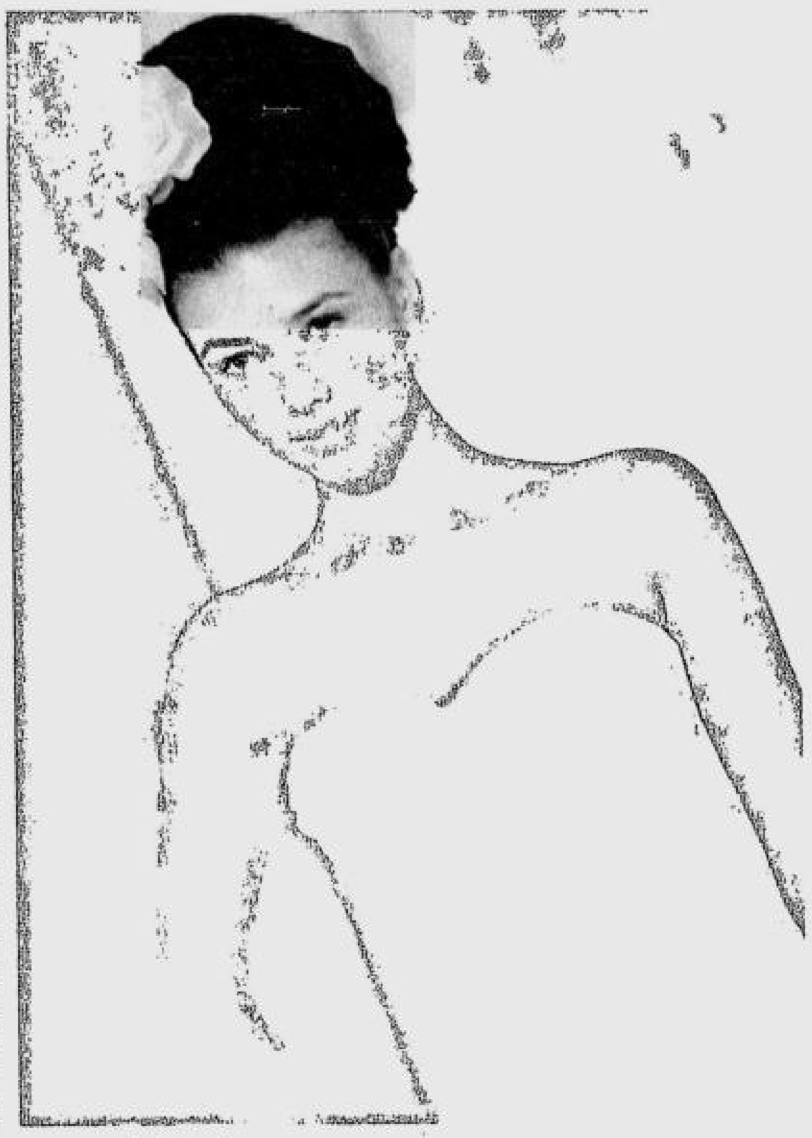


TRADITIONAL Japanese wedding dress, a hand-painted silk kimono (left), and contemporary bridal wear by Katsura

Romance in white

DR. JOHN Bartolone makes his presentation to the Asian media at the Pond's Institute in Nakameguro, Tokyo, Japan.

POND'S Phils. brand manager Renel Cecilio (center) and model Helena Belmonte (right)

PROFESSOR Goh Chee Leok

SAMIR Singh and David Steele

BEAUTY editor Agoo Bengzon gets a complexion check with the Chromameter.

DR. JESSE Weissman, Pond's senior research scientist

From page E1

tamin E, a known antioxidant that targets ultraviolet-induced pigmentation; Allantoin, a skin protectant that promotes cell regeneration and controls the body's production of prostaglandin which causes inflammation; Vitamin B3 or Niacinamide, which inhibits melanin from transferring to the skin's surface.

Niacinamide is a patented ingredient by Unilever, makers of Pond's, for use in skin-lightening products. Flawless White contains the highest level of Vitamin B3 of all Pond's whitening lines, according to Dr. John Bartolone, global R&D director for Skin Category.

Perhaps the most interesting component in VAO-B3 is the Optics. This is the ingredient that instantly blurs or masks spots, thus functioning like a concealer. Its difference from makeup, which is deposited at about 200 microns, explains Bartolone, is that Optics is 20 times thinner.

"[Optics] doesn't eliminate the spots, but it provides a measurable benefit. It evens out the tone so it has a real optical effect," he said. "It scatters the light and blurs the edges." VAO-B3 works on different layers of the skin, at different depths, he added.

Big culprit

The Pond's survey also revealed that women in the northern part of the region, who generally have fairer skin, are more prone to sunspots, while women in the southern part, including Filipinas, deal more frequently with pigmentation from acne scars.

The biggest culprit for women's skin problems is the sun, according to professor Goh Chee Leok, who teaches medicine at the National University of Singapore. Goh, who is also former medical director of the Lion City's National Skin Center, said the one "minimum requirement" women should follow as part of their skin regimen is to stay away from the sun, or wear sunscreen when exposure is inevitable.

Flawless White notably doesn't say it contains SPF on the package. Instead, it says "Multiple UV Protection." That's because "there are things we can't say in certain countries because of regulations," explained Bartolone. "But the fact is that there are organic and inorganic materials there. Even the Optics system contains UV protection. It's a way to say we have something new—and we do. And it's more than that, so it would be unfair to call it the old way."

Pond's has a 50-percent market share in the Philippines, and is claimed to be the No. 1 brand in the whitening segment. Founded in 1846, Pond's is iconic to Filipinos, many of whom grew up with memories of their mother or grandmother using the famous Cold Cream.

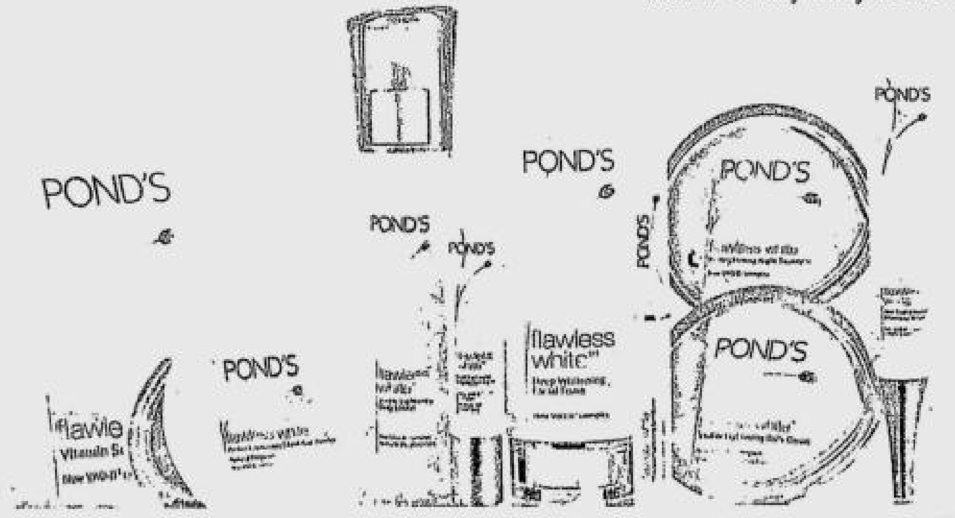
Most important market

Asia is the most important market for Pond's, with a 25-percent share of the brand's total business. Its owner, Unilever, boasts of having 700 scientists in its 10 research institutes, and over 200 patents to its name. "Pond's was the first to understand the importance of skin lightening in the region," said Steele. "That explains why it has this kind of market share. I discovered this when I was marketing director here."

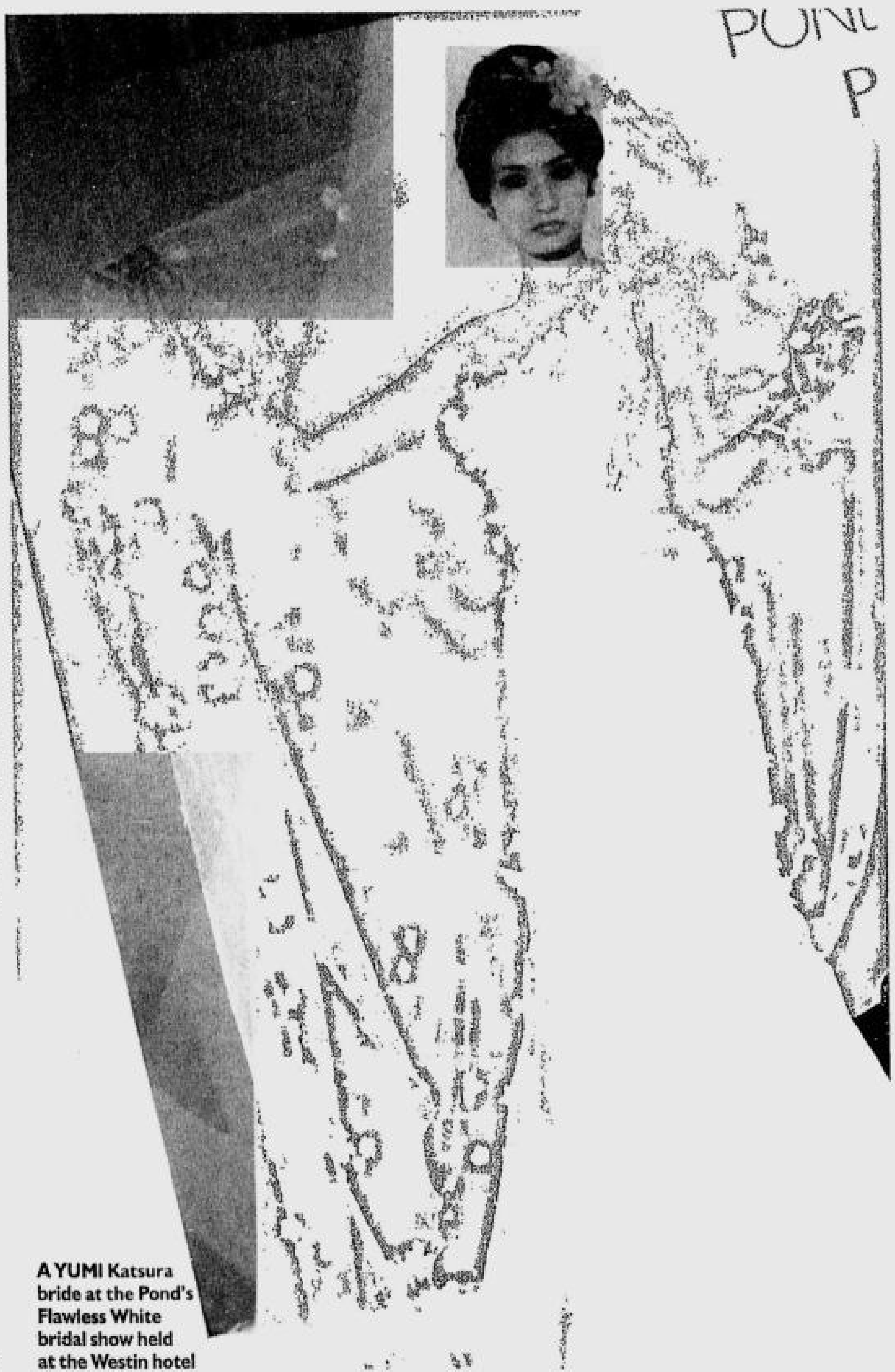
The new Flawless White line, which will roll out next month, comes in stunning packaging—white, sculpted frosted glass jars and slender bottles with transparent pink caps, and boxed in pink and silver cartons—all part of the "physical attraction" strategy.

"The second stage of true love is the falling-in-love part. We innovate so she'll fall in love. There's the promise of prestige at a great price. And we deliver what we promise... The packaging is like Brad Pitt; it elicits aaahs from women," pitched Singh.

So, will the Flawless White woman in the TV spot end up in bridal finery with the male lead by her side? Or need we still ask the hopeless romantic in every Pond's woman?



NEW addition to the Pond's "masstige" line will retail from P119 (facial foam) to P489 (night cream). The star product, the day cream, will sell for P459. There's also a serum, eye cream, mask and two-way powder. Flawless White will be in stores by the second week of November.



A YUMI Katsura bride at the Pond's Flawless White bridal show held at the Westin hotel in Tokyo.

BEAUTY BUZZ BEAUTY BUZZ BEAUTY BUZZ BEAUTY BUZZ

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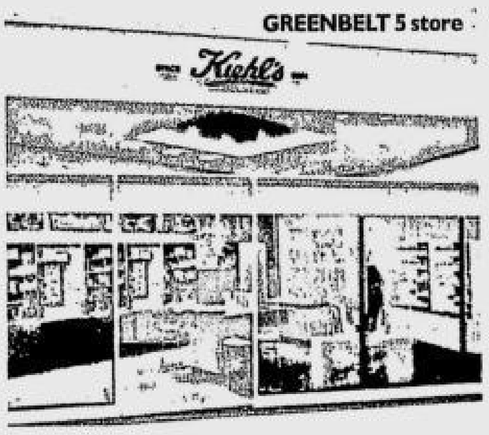


KIEHL'S RECENTLY OPENED its first free-standing Philippine store at the Greenbelt 5 Fashion and Lifestyle Center.

Founded as an old-world apothecary in New York's East Village over 150 years ago, Kiehl's represents a blend of cosmetic, pharmaceutical, herbal and medicinal knowledge developed for generations.

Today, the flagship store in New York is a fixture in its community, as with every single Kiehl's branch around the world. Its fundamental philosophies, product standards and core values have remained the same: Science, Education, Giving, Service, Respect, and Quality.

To celebrate the Manila store's opening, Kiehl's Worldwide general manager Rob Robillard flew in to greet the brand's first customers. The evening also featured the Manila Symphony Orchestra and singer Skarlet, and announced as its first local charity beneficiary Diether Ocampo's K.I.D.S. Foundation.

Kiehl's premium bestsellers include Lip Balm #1, Crème de Corps, Amino Acid Shampoo, Ultra Facial Moisturizer, and the brand's newest star line: the Yerba Mate range.

Sweet, subtle sparkle

MAKE UP FOR EVER CELEBRATES ITS first anniversary by launching a new range of eye color: Diamond Shadow. These 12 shades are a blend of the sparkling iridescence of Diamond Powder and the rich color of Make Up For Ever's Eye Shadow.

Diamond Shadow captures light and illuminates the skin while providing a subtle glitter effect, full coverage, and superb color. The finish is fine and subtle.

Mica creates intense color and a soft, satin finish. The high concentration of pigment provides excellent color pay-off and long-lasting wear. Nylon powders deliver an ultra-soft quality that allows effortless blending and very comfortable wear. Borosilicate crystals and mother-of-pearl create uniquely sophisticated sparkle and shine.

Diamond Shadow may be applied with Make Up For Ever Pearly Waterproof Eye shadow Pencil as base for a more intense color. It may be applied directly on the lids for a more subtle look. Diamond Shadows are dermatologically and ophthalmologically-tested.

Diamond Shadow (P1,350/ 2.5g) is available in Diamond White, Diamond Turquoise, Diamond Pink, N304 Diamond Lime, N305 Diamond Peach, N306 Diamond Beige, N307 Diamond Black, N308 Diamond Night Blue, N309 Diamond Purple, N310 Diamond Green, N311 Diamond Burgundy and N312 Diamond Brown.

DIAMOND
Eyeshadow

Receive a chic six-piece Travel Make-up Kit with a single minimum purchase of P3,500 at Make Up For Ever boutiques: 3/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall (tel. 6385702); 3/L The Block SM North EDSA (4420368), and our counter at Watsons G/F SM Mall of Asia (5560435). Promo runs until Oct. 31.

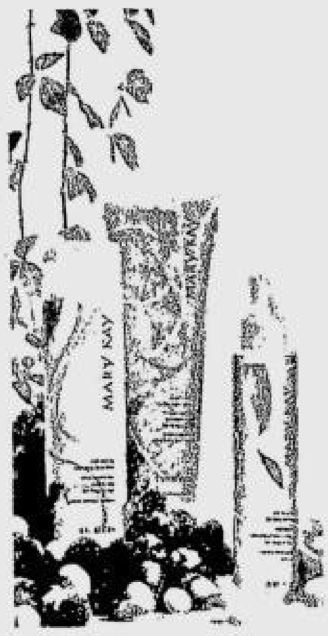
New botanical body care line

MARY KAY
MARY KAY
MARY KAY

THE NEW MARY KAY BODY Care line is a collection of botanically enriched products designed for the skin, the senses and the soul: Mary Kay Loofah Body Cleanser, Mary Kay Nourishing Body Lotion and Mary Kay Deo Body Spritzer, which come in two variants: Red Tea & Fig Collection and Lotus & Bamboo Collection.

The Red Tea & Fig Collection melds the natural antioxidant benefits of red tea, Mary Kay's exclusive Rainforest Harvest blend of avidsonia plum, lillypilly, and lemon aspen and a scent lightly sweetened with fig notes. The blend evokes warmth that stays all day long.

The Lotus & Bamboo Collection recalls a delicate lotus floating on water and a majestic bamboo symbolizing long life with its clean, crisp and refreshing fragrance.



The Mary Kay Loofah Body Cleanser has tiny bits of natural loofah fiber that removes surface impurities and reveals the skin's innate radiance. And the Mary Kay Nourishing Body Lotion is a lightweight and mildly cooling lotion enriched with emollient sunflower oils that condition the skin, and Vitamin E, a powerful antioxidant.

To lift up your senses day or night, spray on Mary Kay Deo Body Spritzer, which has a light refreshing formula that neutralizes odors on contact.

Mary Kay does not only offer superb skincare and cosmetics but also business opportunities that can help you attain professional financial fulfillment. Call 8596211 or visit www.marykay.com.ph.

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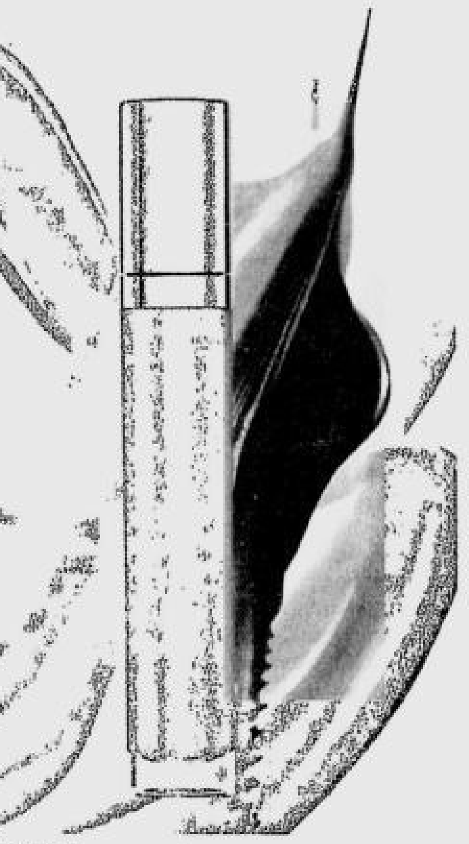
MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

AS A CONSUMER I know how frustrating it is to want something so badly and know it is only available overseas, so that the only option is to have it shipped here at 300 percent the original cost.



SHU Uemura Gloss Unlimited

One of my overseas favorites is now here—Jane Iredale the Skin Care Make-up. I first fell in love with Jane Iredale a few years back when I had to have my facial warts cauterized and was not allowed to wet my face for three days. I was resigned to walking around looking like a Poppy Seed bagel when I remembered I had bought JITSCM powder foundation and concealer in the US from my last trip. I immediately covered the black spots from the lasered warts and the red marks on my face from the pricked pimples with Disappear concealer (P1,600) and after blotting the rest of my greasy face, I applied Amazing Base SPF 20 Loose Minerals Powder foundation (P2,500).

The results were eye-popping as the flaws disappeared with every stroke of a brush and stayed that way the whole night. My face looked newly washed with invisible pores; it had a velvety texture and zero spots and blotches. People at the party even commented on how great my skin was even without a stitch of makeup.

The great part about JITSCM is that since it has skincare properties, it does double-duty as it covers by repairing and soothing the skin. I actually slept with it for two nights till it was okay to wash my face on day three. No breakouts and irritation, just smooth skin on unpricked or unlasered areas.

Dermatologist Dr. Venia Conception A. Javellana of Advanced Aesthetics recommends JITSCM to her clients. Ordinarily it would not be recommended to those who had undergone chemical peels, facials and microdermabrasion.

My new road-test favorites are: Liquid Minerals foundation (P3,150), which comes in a liquid gel and dries to a sheer-powder finish with medium coverage; Absence Oil Control Primer (P2,200), which helps foundation stay on and keeps the grease at bay; Pure Matte Finish Pressed Powder (P2,400), and Sunbeam Quad Bronzer (P2,640), which I use as my eye shadow, contour and blush as an economical option to buying several shades of eye shadow and blush which could cost P1,600 each. (Just mix the four shades up and adjust proportion so you have limitless shades in one round package.)

PureMoist Lipcolours SPF 18 has rich pigment but with a super-moist finish and staying power. My favorite is Sharon (nude beige) and Sandra the frosted version.

The LipSheres SPF 18 line only has two shades that look ghoulish on the tube but goes on a sheer berry tint like just bitten lips—go for Babe, a maroon red or Laura, a burgundy plum that suits all skin tones.

The products are very pigmented so a little goes a long way—I honestly don't know how I will get to finish these before the two-year expiration. Visit www.janeiredale.com but bear in mind that the color swatches are totally different from the actual lipstick shades so it is better to see in person.

New products

A visionary in the makeup and face beauty care, Shu Uemura has once again come up with new products that will make you drool.

First on the list is the Face Architect foundation (P2,350), aptly named because by proper technique and distribution on the skin, you can actually alter your face structure by defining cheekbones and softening the jaw line aside from just perfecting the skin's appearance.

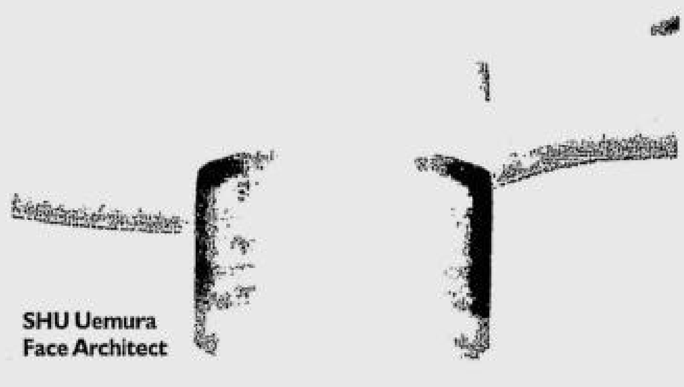
Make sure you consult with the Shu Uemura counter makeup artist so she can teach you the proper application and maximize the benefits. Make sure you get the shade that matches your skin perfectly or it will all be a waste.

Another new product is Gloss Unlimited (P1,000), which comes in two formulas: Natural, for more color, in seven shades; and Shiny, for more of the saran-wrap effect with sheer color without the stickiness, in eight shades.

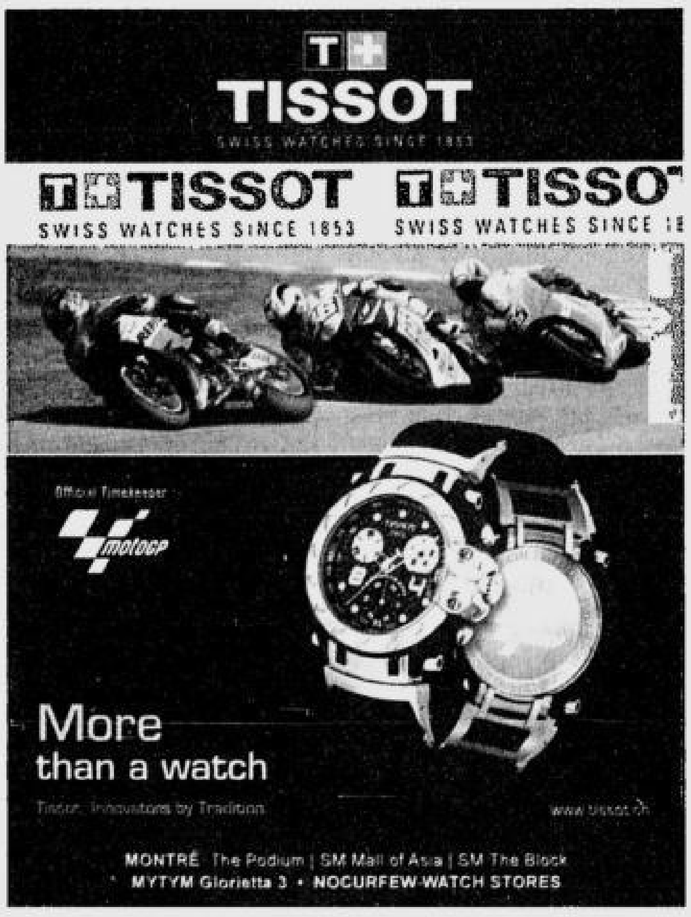
My favorites in the Natural line are RD165N (cherry popsicle) and BR755N (nude brown). For Shiny, I like BG952S (nude) and WN283S (just-bitten lips). They can be used on top of regular lipstick or alone. Tip: They make lips look fuller so it would be a great gift for thin-lipped girls who want a fuller effect.

Another new product is the Premium A/I cleansing oil for fragile skin (P6,500/ 450 ml and P2,650/ 150 ml). This is especially for those whose skin have been damaged by the sun or have just come from serious treatments such as chemical peels and facials with pricking involved. It contains ingredients that keep the swelling down and soothe the sun-burned sting.

E-mail the author at kinnysalas@yahoo.com.



SHU Uemura Face Architect



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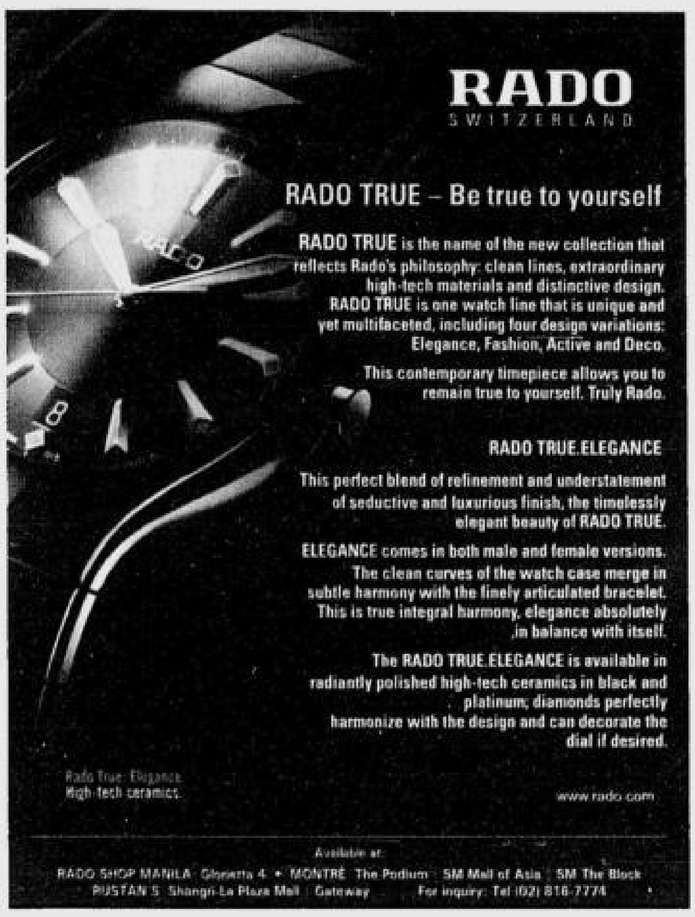

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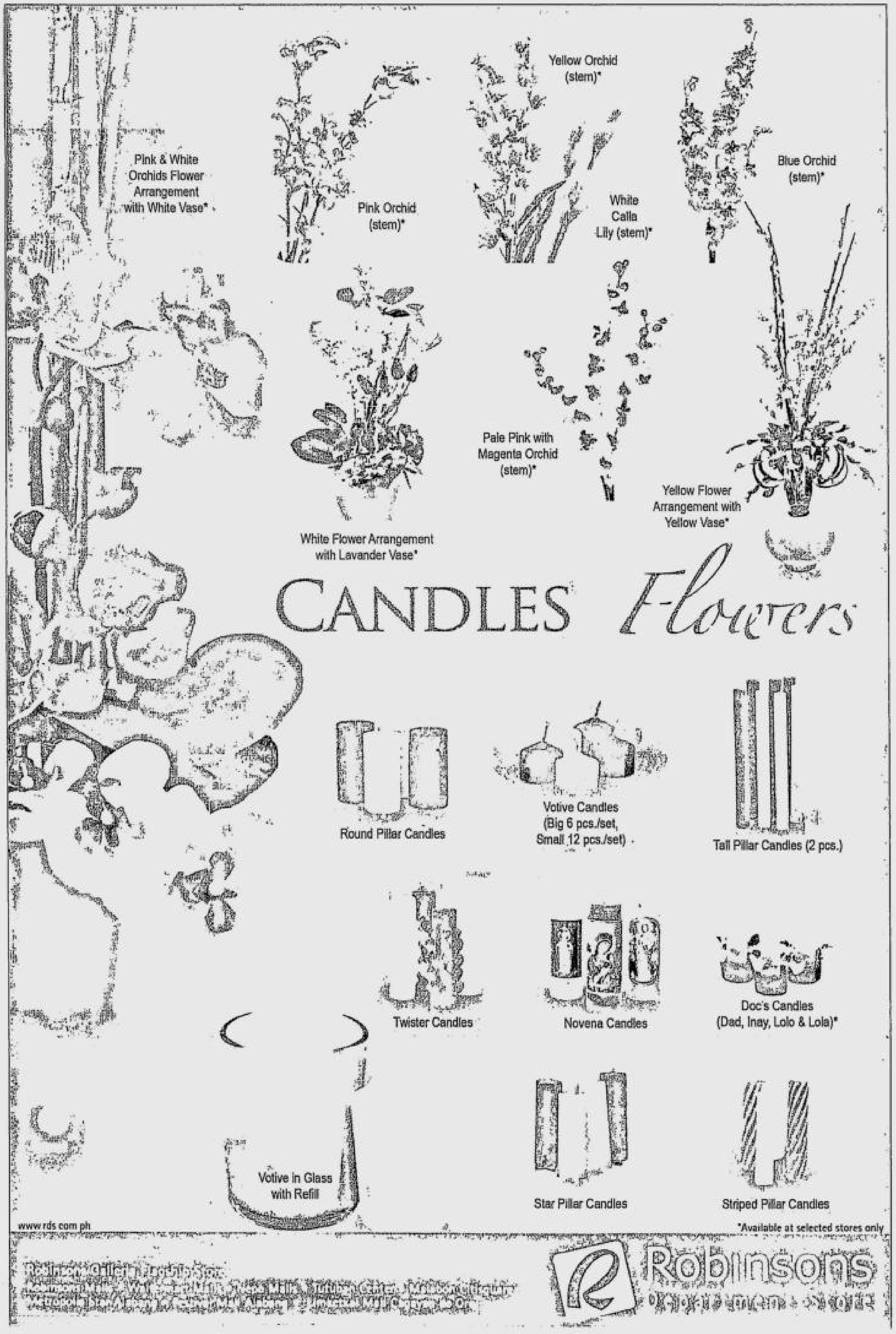

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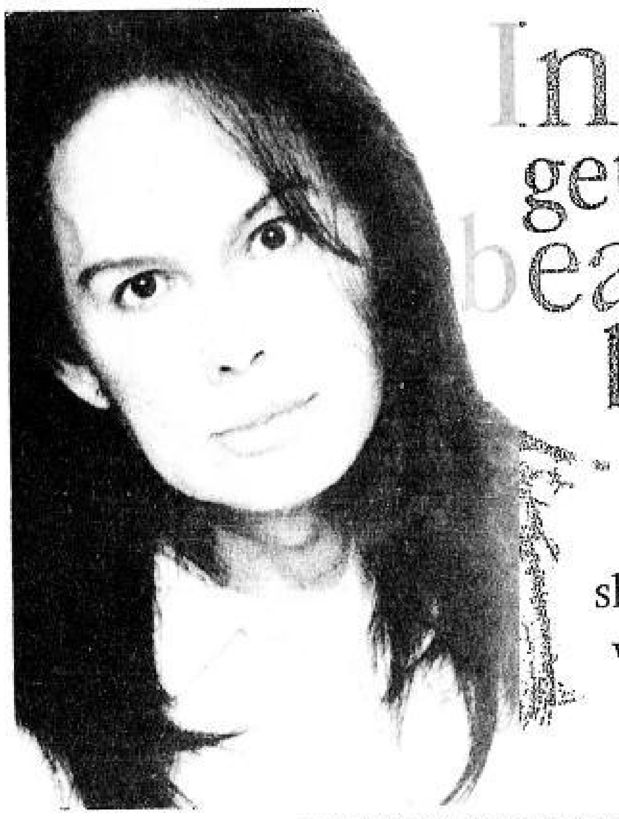


Inno gets his bearings back

He has an invitational show on Monday with accessories designer Bea Valdes

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

MY EYES WERE ON THE Nadal-Murray match of the Madrid Masters on TV (if only that Brit had greater killer instinct). My mind was on a coming interview. My ear was pinned to my cell phone, listening to our Laguna itinerary.

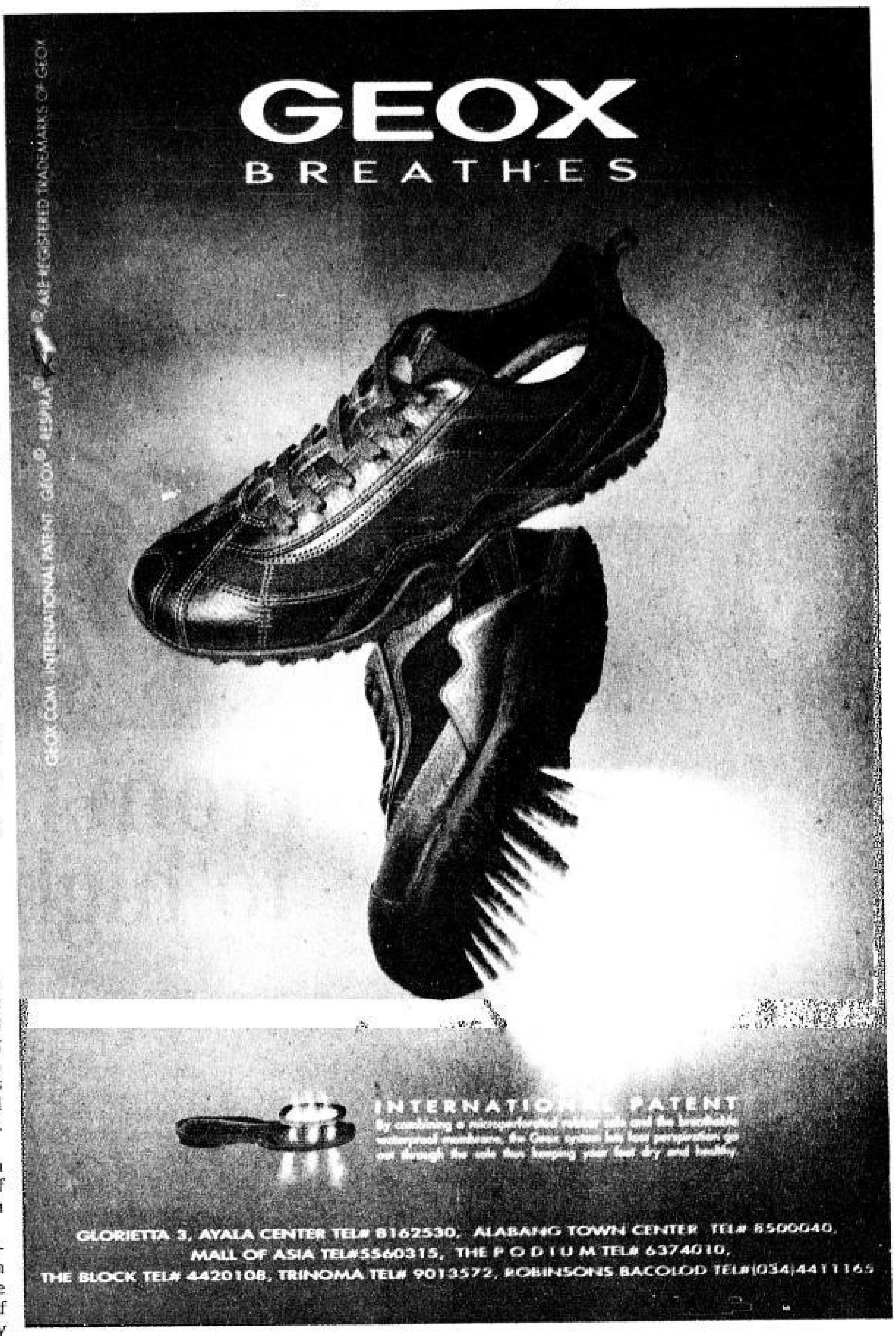
Then the text message came in from a friend who was standing right on the Makati Shangri-La driveway when the Glorietta blast happened. His succeeding SMS said it was due to an "LPG tank exploding." Considering that his stove exploded right in his face only two weeks ago, he understandably had a fear of explosion. "Why are bursting ovens dogging me?" he texted.

That tragi-comic comment aside, you always remember what you're doing at the exact moment of a disaster, like 9/11. It's as if we're getting into the habit of marking our private moments with public disasters. Another friend, who a second earlier was excitedly planning our Laguna trip, turned somber, as if back to under-siege mode. "This is sobering," she said.

In the days to follow, that would be an understatement. Young lives on the brink of a bright future were lost, among others, in that blast.

Over the weekend at dinner, retail tycoon Ed Gaisano was telling us about a book he couldn't put down. Titled "One More Day," it's about a man at the point of killing himself, only to wait one more day

INNO/ F3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VICTORY LINER 624

Throughout North Luzon, Victory Liner can go the distance with Sun!

"With more than 50% savings on our phone bills, Sun helps us cover any rise in fuel and toll charges."

Marivic Del Pilar, Treasury & Marketing Manager of Victory Liner

Victory Liner, one of the largest bus companies in the country, faces the challenge of transporting tens of thousands of passengers all over North Luzon everyday. That is why they trust and believe in a communication expert that is just as effective—Sun Cellular.

"Wala na ang culture na nagtitipid ng load because with Sun's Call & Text Unlimited, we can call each other anytime," says Marivic.

All field and line supervisors use Sun Cellular to monitor the Victory Liner bus fleet. Even their drivers and conductors now use Sun Cellular.

"In the event of accidents, traffic or floods, they contact the head office in Manila, wherever in North Luzon they may be," says Marivic. Decision-making and reaction time is cut, and communication among the eight major terminals and sub-terminals in North Luzon is more efficient.

After 62 years of being in business, Victory Liner is bound for more success. And with Sun Cellular ensuring fast communication, they will definitely continue to go places.

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SUN CELLULAR
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WORK in style with Debenhams' Red Herring high-waist trousers paired with a Red Herring free-flowing blouse.

DEBENHAMS' Red Herring tunic dress with embellishment

GO PARISIAN chic with a floral tunic dress by Debenhams designer brand J Jeans, best worn over stockings.

From tunics to high-waisted trousers

PRACTICAL OUTERWEAR AND FUN, FLIRTY prints in bold and neutral colors make up Debenhams' Autumn/Winter collection.

The new military theme for women is all about oversized zips, studs and buckles. In short, military dressing with a modern twist. For this season there is an array of coats and jackets with metallic finish. The biker jacket is a key fashion statement. Layering is still a fashion must-do with wide belts cinching outerwear at the waist.

The modernist theme features simple pieces in color blocks. Art house-inspired prints are still in style. However, the color scheme has toned down a bit as compared to the bright hues of the Summer collection. This season, greys with gold and orange accents are the key color combination. Looks are kept clean, simple yet sleek.

The retro remix collection is all about reinventing '70s fashion. The collection embodies sophisticated '70s-inspired dressing featuring high-waist trousers and free-flowing feminine blouses. Clean, simple, bold silhouettes form the basis for a truly modern look.

For evening wear, heavy embellishment and jeweled trims are the trend. Tunic dresses in metallic colors still dominate the collection as well as tone-on-tone colorations. Key colors include silver and soft gold with bold highlights of red, cobalt and fuchsia.

For fun, girly, '60s-inspired dressing, Debenhams introduces its Parisian theme featuring short hemlines, swing jackets and bib-front blouses. Pretty, feminine tops are worn under tanks and pinafore dresses, while coats and jackets come in swing silhouettes for a more feminine look.

Debenhams is located at 3/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall (tel. 6329802) and at 3/L Rustan's Makati (8184775). Debenhams TriNoma opens this November.

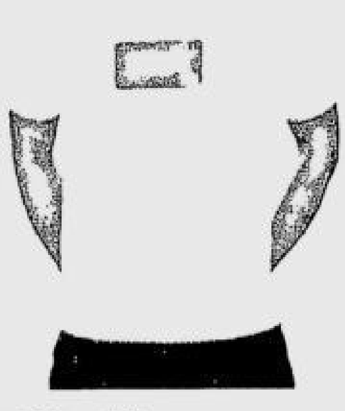
It's repartee time

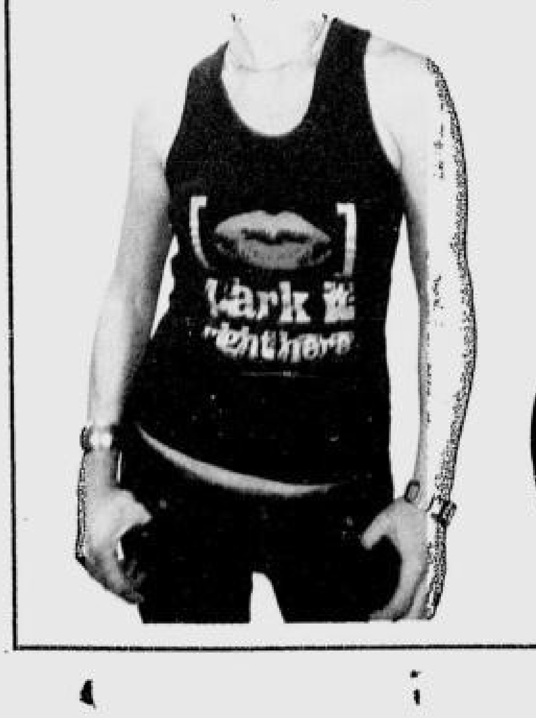
A BRAND THAT IS 100-PERCENT distinctively Filipino, Repartee is a line of T-shirts made with ultra soft, luxe and cool cotton fabric. Designed with stylized, high-impact graphics and text, it's a collection of casual clothes for men and women.

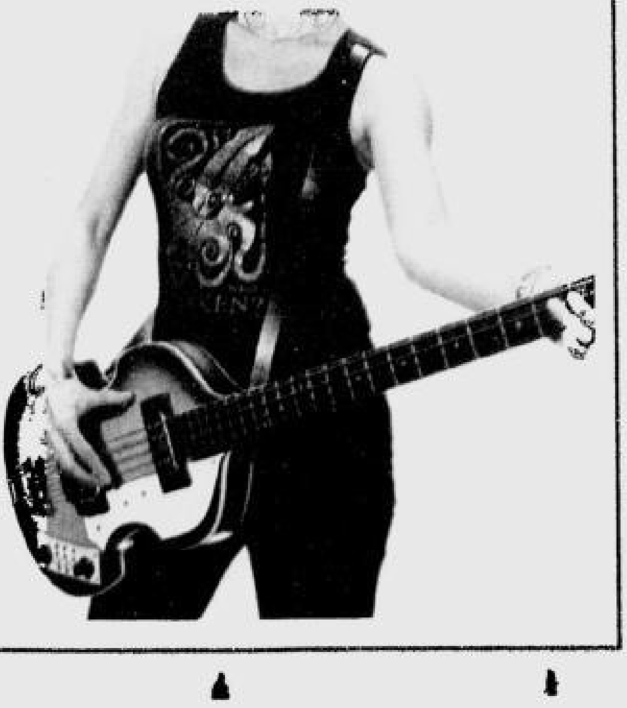
Repartee is truly a unique brand with a special sense of humor. It offers an introductory promo price of P675 for men's shirts and P630 for women's and kids'.

Repartee is currently doing the rounds of holiday bazaars: Oct. 28, Friends of CCP Bazaar; Nov. 11, Rotary Bazaar; Nov. 18, Rotary West Bazaar at Intercon Hotel; Nov. 17-18, Marche International Bazaar at Makati Sports Club; Nov. 21-25 and Dec. 21-23, Noel Bazaar at World Trade Center; Nov. 30-Dec. 2, St. James the Great Bazaar in Ayala Alabang; Dec. 14-16 and 18-23, SM Mega International Bazaar at SM Megatrade Hall in Megamall.

Repartee will also be on repartee.multiply.com at the end of October. E-mail reparteegozoandvitas@yahoo.com.







REPARTEE shirts are made with ultra soft, luxe and cool cotton fabric.

VERSATILE and chic plaid bolero paired with a basic lycra pink shirt and a classic straight-cut dark denim that will surely match the day to nighttime look of all moms-to-be.

FOR A MORE casual do, Menchu Mantecon is wearing a chocolate-brown jacket paired with red graphic T-shirt and classic straight-fit dark denim.

Maternity chic

THERE USED TO BE A TIME WHEN pregnant women were stuck with big and drab or tacky maternity clothes that made them want to just stay at home.

Spanish retail giant Zara understands the pregnant woman's need to flaunt her new curves—and still be as fashionable as ever while she's at it—so the brand recently added to its stores a special line of clothes for the moms-to-be.

The Zara Pre-Mum maternity collection is an addition to the brand's trendy line of apparel and accessories. Occupying a new space in all Zara outlets, the Pre-Mum section boasts a collection made up of must-have basics and unique, eye-catching items—clearly being pregnant doesn't mean a loss of style.

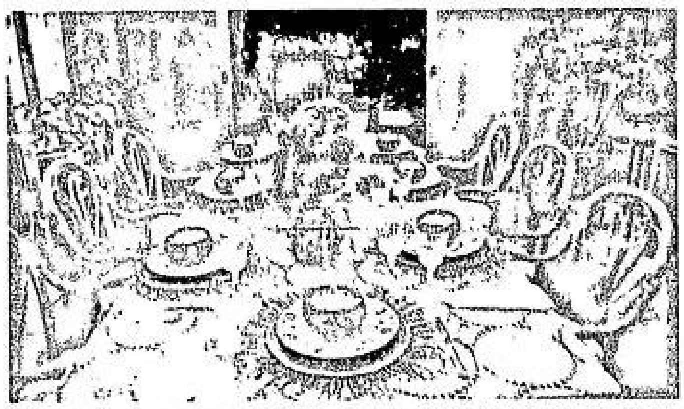
Menchu Mantecon—businesswoman and mother of 14-year-old Bea and wife of businessman Bito for 16 years—knows this for sure.

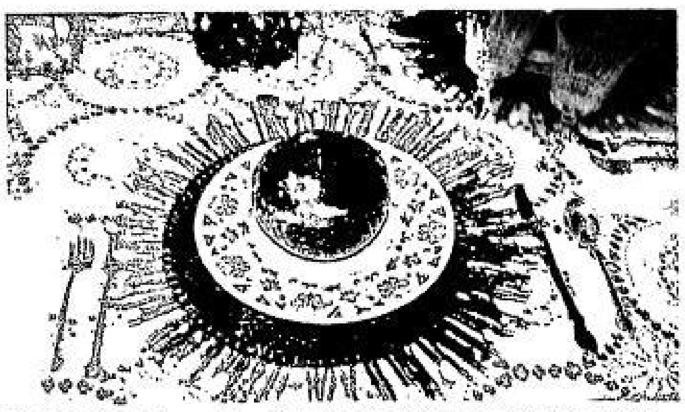
A Zara fan, Mantecon doesn't have to switch clothing brands just because there's now a bun in the oven. "I am so grateful that my favorite brand now has a maternity line," she beams. "This means I don't have to look further for a new set of clothes now that I'm expecting."

The collection naturally boasts of styles that look especially good on pregnant women such as A-line skirts, empire-waist dresses and swingy tops. For working moms like her, the line also has a lot of corporate pieces like jackets, long-sleeve tops and blouses. "Those are actually my favorites," she says. Mantecon runs Lifecycles, an events company.

Shot on location at the Rockwell Glass House, Mantecon shows off the newest from the Zara Pre-Mum collection, from nice-fitting jeans and sexy leggings to jackets, vests and capes. Accessories such as silk scarves, gloves, hats and bags complete that fashionable pregnant look.

The new Zara Pre-Mum collection can be found in all Zara stores such as Rockwell (G/F), Shangri-La (G/F), Glorietta 4 (G/F), Mall of Asia (2/F), and the newly opened branch in TriNoma. Call 8906888.


TEREZIN combines Old-World elegance with native chic for her table setting.


CLOSE-UP of place setting blending fine blue-and-white china with indigenous coconut-shell bowls

TEREZIN Mendezona (second from right) at home with Marissa Fernan, Philip Rodriguez and Arcy Gayatin

Inno gets his bearings back

From page F1

DERWIN and Dada Wong. The bride is in a Philip Rodriguez gown of Alencon lace and duchesse satin.

to discover what little good feelings life has to offer.

One more day—that's what today's life is, really. One more day leading to another, or so you wish. It's something the blast victims didn't have.

One more show

One more show—that's what Inno Sotto has before the year ends. Never does a year pass without Inno holding a show. He's not been really below the radar. Yet people speculate a lot about what's going on in his life. He's the fodder of gossip mill, from how he handles his finances to his love life.

"There will always be speculation. I've learned to look beyond that. I don't dwell on it," Inno told us.

He's presenting a first on Monday—a collaborative show with world-renowned bag and fashion accessories designer Bea Valdes at Makati Shangri-La. His 50-piece collection is inspired by Alhambra, a place he visited a long time ago and has had him enthralled since, particularly its Moorish and Christian elements.

"I'm no longer drifting. It was as if I was in limbo," Inno said about the almost three years since the sudden death of his long-time companion, Richard Tann. Richard handled Inno's business operations and produced Inno's shows as Inno focused on the creative. Richard was an indispensable collaborator. He was, as Inno himself put it, "my buffer, my front line."

"It took a while to get my bearings back," Inno said. "What's most amazing was, I didn't know I could handle things, but I could do it—mostly the show, its direction."

It helped that he has been given charge of Rustan's creative direction for the store. That gave him back his momentum.

"But I'm happy and at peace," Inno said.

And he continues to live in his Manila digs, contrary to rumors.

ORCHIDS hang overhead instead of obligatory chandelier in this wedding-tent setting.

Mendezona style

They don't make them like they used to. This comes to mind every time I encounter Cebu's Terezin Mendezona, easily one of the most stylish women I've seen. Hers is a style refined yet enriched by the years; it's taste not anchored on brands or money, but on her own personality.

Style, after all, is wisdom made beautiful.

One Saturday night in Cebu, we had a quiet dinner in her home atop a hill. Forgive our hawk eye, but we couldn't help but note the details: the dainty embroidered linen coasters and napkins smelling freshly washed (clean and fresh—that's where many wannabe hostesses fail, despite the fortune they spend), the ingenious use of leaves and blooms plucked from her garden, the reuse of coconut plates retrieved from her cupboard. It was a simple, home-made dinner, but impeccable and tasteful. Everything came almost naturally out of her, no strenuous or pretentious effort at all.

It was apparent she grew up in such gentility and civility. Being married to the head of an oil firm required her to entertain often and be based in different places, was good training ground. Often, she made do with what was available to produce a fine dining table.

We also saw her prepare for a thousand guests, to be exact, at the recent wedding of Derwin and Dada Wong. The bride was a gamine beauty in Philip Rodriguez's Audrey Hepburn-inspired gown of Alencon lace and duchesse satin.

At the White Gold reception, the couple had the huge hall camouflaged by white drapery. It was transformed into an elegant tent, the white silken sheets serving like a canvas for moving patterns of light.

In place of chandeliers, dangling from the ceiling were orchids arranged in rows that ran the length of the presidential table. Flowers in baby pink, yellow and green—the wedding motif—were clustered on the tables.

GRAY shirt, printed tee, red shirt, black polo, black tee, all from edc by Esprit

From glam to grunge

ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL YOUTHful brands in both the European and American markets, Esprit has a line for all ages.

Esprit de Corps (edc), one of Esprit's five lifestyle brands, has found its rightful place among Esprit's other lines such as Women's Casual, Women's Collection, Men's Casual and Men's Collections.

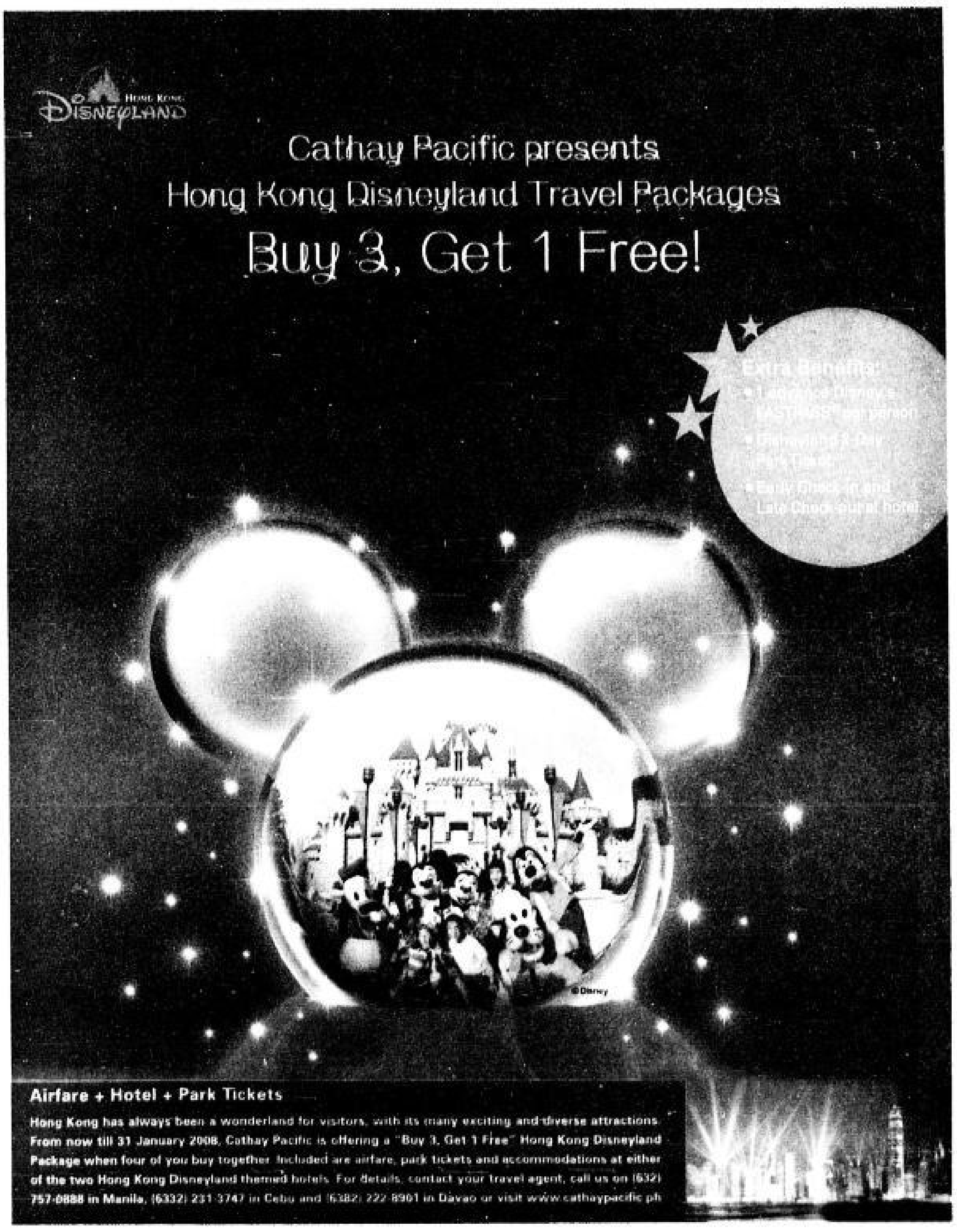
Available in freestanding stores at 3/L Ayala TriNoma; SM Megamall Bldg. B; G/F Esprit Glorietta 3; and Power Plant Mall, Rockwell, edc by Esprit was launched in 1998 within the Esprit umbrella as its fashionably trendy little sister. It targets both men and women ages 15-25 years old with a fun, hip and fresh attitude.

SHIRT (P1,498); belt (P1,498); jeans (P2,998)

SHIRT (P1,498); jeans (P3,198)

The phenomenal breakthrough of edc by Esprit led to the launch of edc men in 2002, which is now also available here in the Philippines.

In the Philippines, Cinderella Marketing Corp. (CMC) has held the franchise of Esprit since 1985 and exclusively distributes edc by Esprit. CMC continues to expand the Esprit brand locally with 17 stores, including the newly opened edc by Esprit branches in Ayala TriNoma, SM Megamall B and Power Plant Mall, Rockwell.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Age is a Number

The Story of Two Ten-year Old Whiz Kids

Kristine Lacson and Kisa Elicaño are two ten-year old girls who don't have a lot in common. Kristine is a quiet and reserved girl. She doesn't talk a whole lot and prefers to spend her time reading books. On the other hand, Kisa is more loquacious. She likes telling stories about how her days in school went – complete with vivid descriptions of what she had for recess.

While these two girls may seem like polar opposites of each other, they do have one important similarity: both are Kumon completors and – more impressively – both share the honor of being the youngest Reading and Math program completers in the history of Kumon Philippines.

Kristine Lacson

Kristine Arcega Lacson's entry in Kumon was brought about by circumstances that had nothing to do with added education. Suffering from aetopic dermatitis, a severe condition of skin asthma that causes her incessant itchiness, Kristine was enrolled in Kumon by her mother, Mercy Lacson, so she could keep her attention diverted from her condition to her worksheets.

"It was Kristine's dermatologist who told me about Kumon," Mrs. Lacson said. "We were looking for activities that can divert her attention, and Kumon was the best choice."

What Mommy Mercy and Teacher Gemma Cruz-Ocampo (Kristine's Kumon instructor) didn't expect was that this young girl would prove to be far more than just a regular student.

Exhibiting abilities far beyond her years, Kristine – who one day dreams of becoming an interior designer – blazed through the levels of the Reading program. By the time she was nine years old, Kristine was already reading the works of literature heavyweights like Shakespeare, Milton, and Chaucer.

Her reading and comprehension skills have become so efficient that she's now able to finish books as thick as Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows in four days – no small feat for a ten-year old.

"Kristine's ability went beyond our expectations," Teacher Gemma shared.

In as much as credit is given to her God-given ability, finishing the Reading program was also a goal Kristine set out. Together with the never-ending encouragement and guidance from her family and her instructor, Kristine finally completed the Reading program last March 2007.

"All of us were very happy and proud," Mrs. Mercy Lacson expressed. "Teacher Gemma and I even cried when she passed the achievement test. At long last, she was able to fulfill her goal."

For Kristine Lacson, finishing Kumon's Reading program at the age of ten is impressive in its own right. But doing it with the maturity and discipline rarely seen for someone her age is even more impressive.

Kisa Elicaño

When talking to Kisa Elicaño, it's easy to see the confidence brimming from this young ten-year old. "I want to make my mark. I want to be remembered," she says.

A girl so young, yet so assured, is a trait Kisa developed while studying Kumon. At the tender age of five, her mother, Duday Elicaño enrolled her at Kumon with the belief that such education would be beneficial for her daughter.

After taking up high school in Singapore and seeing the level of mathematics in that country, Duday realized that the curriculum in the Philippines wouldn't be enough for her children. "I wanted my kids to be advanced in their studies, rather than keep pace with the curriculum here," says the mother. "Kumon had the program to do that."

Upon entering Kumon, Mommy Duday and Teacher Mia Taca, Kisa's Kumon instructor, realized that Kisa was not an average student. What they had was a prodigy.

Sure enough, Kisa showed all the attributes of being a wonder kid. Her progression in the Math program was so quick that as a second-grade student in De La Salle Zobel, she was already learning and mastering high school mathematics.

"It was very challenging," Kisa admits. "But at the same time, the sense of fulfillment made me want to keep going."

In addition to her regular school work, Kisa also balanced a lot of her time with her Kumon worksheets, piano and ballet classes, and, not to mention, a plethora of competitions. Such a demanding schedule would make anybody – even adults – frown in dismay. Kisa, however, takes it in stride and says that there's a feeling of satisfaction by doing all these things. "It makes me happy to be able to do all these things. It's something to be proud of," says Kisa.

As the youngest person to ever finish the Math program in the history of Kumon Philippines, ten - year old Kisa Elicaño talks in a way that belies her young age. But then again, what else would you expect from someone who has mastered trigonometry and calculus at a time when her classmates are only starting to get introduced to algebra.

For more information about Kumon, please call (02) 885-0026 or email at inquiries@kumon.com.ph or visit us at www.kumon.com.ph

KUMON

Beach time

TRUE SEASIDE PLEASURES ARE THANKfully uncomplicated—the sun, the sand and the surf. Maybe that's also why beach dressing is about ease—clothes that look good and feel cool and a good watch to match.

Global watch brand Timex has a collection for men that adds the right touch to the boho-beach vibe.

The Expedition series features two high-tech pieces that combine precision and technology. The Expedition Chrono Alarm Timer has a night mode feature along with a nine-hour chronograph with lap or split option. A second time zone with date allows you to switch times easily while the 3-alarm system gives daily, weekday or weekend options. On the other hand, the Expedition Coastline is perfect for the beach lover with its tide tracker, Indiglo night light and temperature sensor all encased in an all-day white reflector display for easy viewing.

The Timex E-Tide & E-Temp E-Compass has an electronic compass that is exact down to the last degree and includes a declination adjustment scale and fourth hand that electronically tracks the temperature and the tidal position (in Temp and Tide mode).

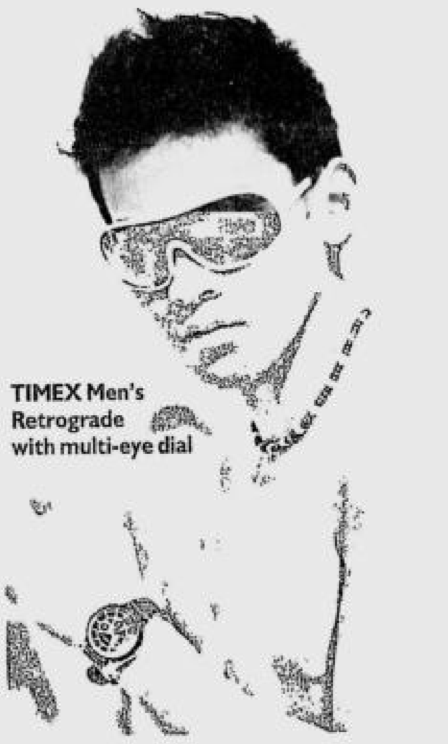
The Timex Men's Retrograde has a multi eye dial with retrograde sub-dial indicating the day of the week, the date and 24-hour time. Water resistant up to 100 meters. Timex Retrograde technology offers a unique and stylish way to display information. The movement allows for a watch to travel in both directions in a fan shape. Once the hand reaches the end of the sundial, it returns to its original position.

Timex 50-lap solar dual tech has a dual tech digital screen which can be turned on and off. It has a 50-lap memory recall and a 24-hour chronograph with lap and split. Sporty and stylish, it comes in a stainless steel case with a resin strap.

Meanwhile, the Timex 50-lap solar shock is shock resistant according to ISO standards. It has a 50-lap memory recall and 100-hour chronograph with lap/split. The daily/weekday/weekend alarm has a 5-minute back-up and two time zones. Water resistant up to 200 meters, it is suitable for the aqua athlete.

In the Philippines, Timex is distributed by Newtrends International Corp. and is sold in more than 300 watch shops nationwide including Timex stores and kiosks and at all Watch Republic outlets.

CHAMPION swimmer Enchong Dee sports the Timex 50-Lap solar shock.



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MEXX Men's Fall 2007 Collection

SEBAGO
PERFORMANCE MARINE
TRINOMA MALL · THE BLOCK SM NORTH EDSA · SM MALL OF ASIA · SM MEGAMALL · FESTIVAL MALL

Next Mexx

BIKER INFLUENCE FOR FALL? WHY not? Mexx's collection this season takes inspiration from men losing themselves in the city streets after all.

Explore your inner rebel with a cotton biker jacket. Add corduroy pants and a striped cotton sweater, and finish with chic leather accessories and a lightweight striped scarf.

Stovepipe pants, refined cardigans and the gray suit are also key pieces. Combine a two-button charcoal suit with a fine pinstripe shirt and subdued tie, and finish with a tonal check overcoat for sophisticated style.

A gray pinstripe suit combines traditional fabrics with a contemporary silhouette. Add a formal white shirt with structured stripe and wide collar, and a shiny tonal tie.

Smooth fabrics and a smart silhouette, meanwhile, create this season's must-have look. Stovepipe jeans combined with a polo and corduroy blazer exude urban sophistication.

For a modern twist, trade the blazer for a fine Merino cardigan. Layer over a subtle satin pinstripe shirt and refined biker-inspired cargos for a casual edge.

Or, take to the streets for a casual lunch or a day of shopping in clean casual denim, a striped cardi and off-white tee. Cover up with a refined utility parka to complete your work in the field.

These coordinated lines of city, smart and casual wear are designed for men aged 27-40 who are fashion-conscious, optimistic, confident and open-minded.

Mexx is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. and is available at SM Mall of Asia, Greenbelt 3, TriNoMa and Rustan's Makati.

KEY pieces include stovepipe pants and a gray suit.

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ComicRelief

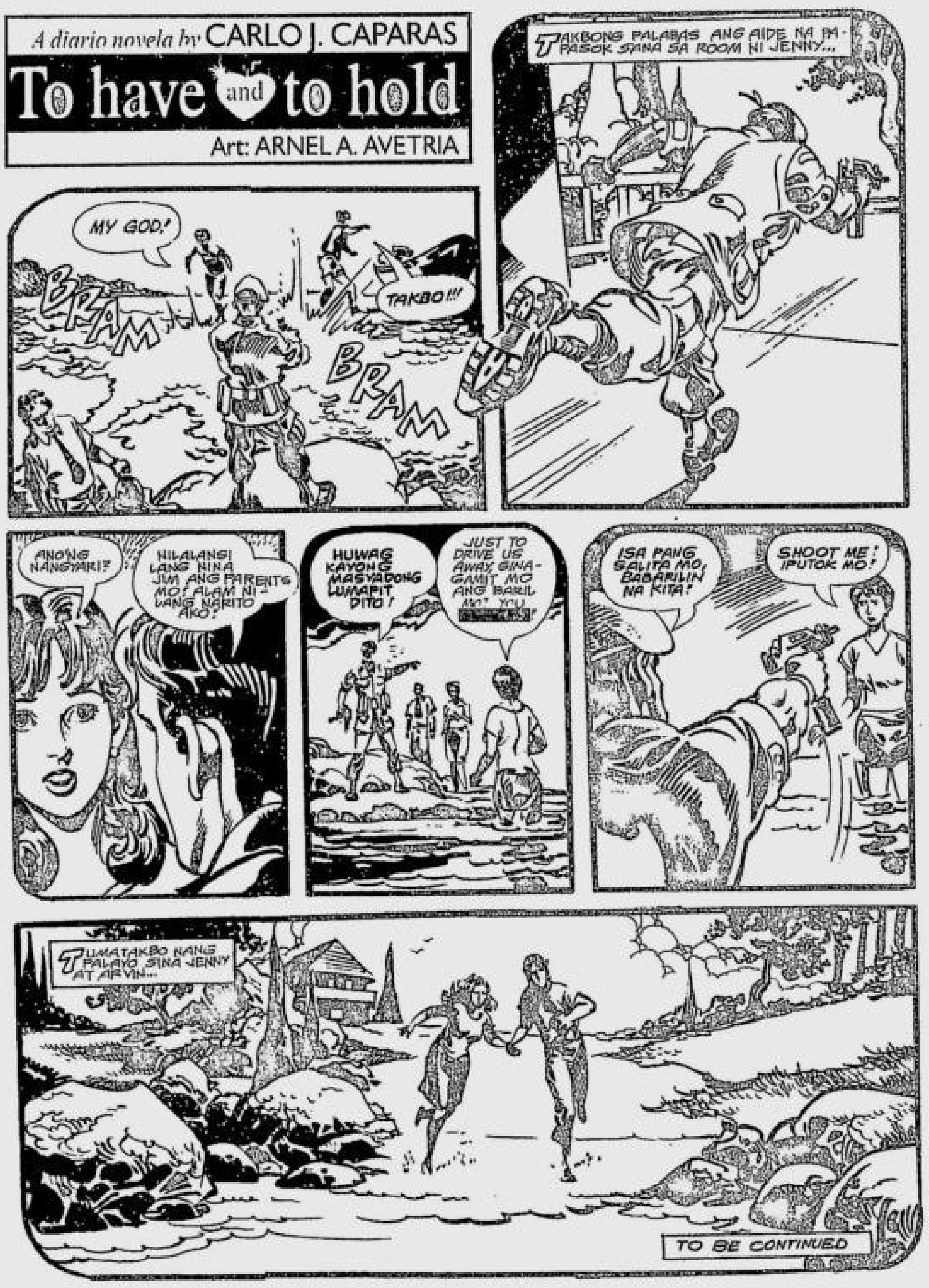
e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2007

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

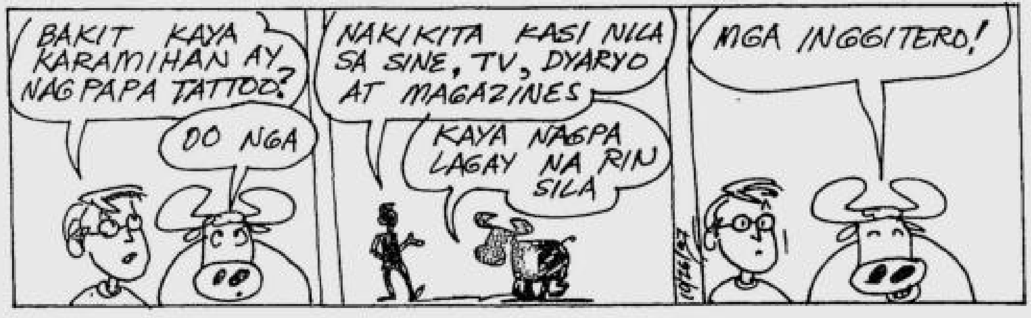
To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


TAKBONG PALABAS ANG AIDE NA PA-PASOK SANA SA ROOM NI JENNY...
MY GOD!
BRAM
TAKBO!!!
BRAM
ANO'NG NANGYARI?
NILALANSI LANG NINA JIM ANG PARENTS MO! ALAM NILANG NARITO AKO!
HUWAG KAYONG MASYADONG LUMAPIT DITO!
JUST TO DRIVE US AWAY, GINA-GAMIT MO ANG BARIL MO, YOU
ISA PANG SALITA MO, BABARILIN NA KITA!
SHOOT ME! IPUTOK MO!
TUMATAKBO NANG PALAYO SINA JENNY AT ARVIN...
TO BE CONTINUED

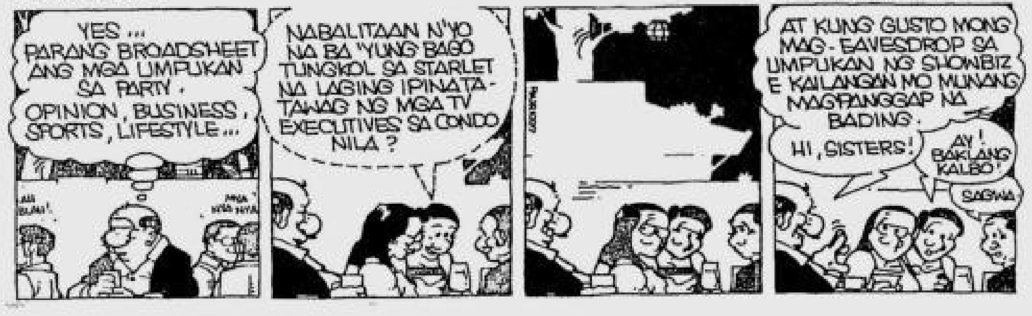
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


BAKIT KAYA KARAMIHAN AY NAGPAPA TATTOO?
OO NGA
NAKIKITA KASI NILA SA SINE, TV, DYARYO AT MAGAZINES
KAYA NAGPA LAGAY NA RIN SILA
MGA INGGITERO!

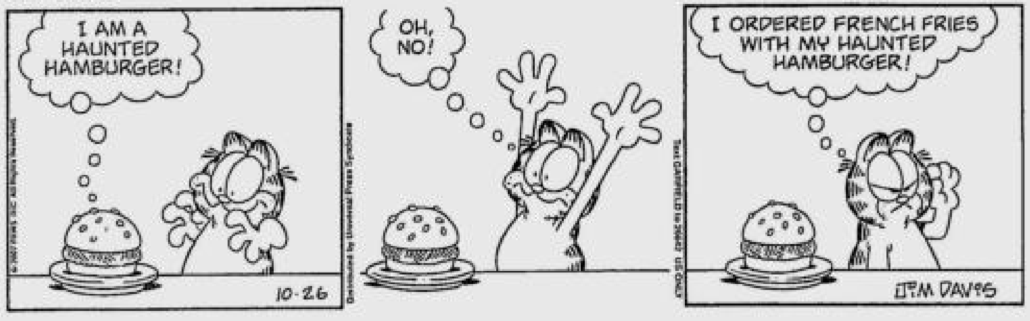
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


YES ... PARANG BROADSHEET ANG MGA UMPUKAN SA PARTY. OPINION, BUSINESS, SPORTS, LIFESTYLE...
NABALITAAN N'YO NA BA 'YUNG BAGO TUNGKOL SA STARLET NA LAGING IPINATA-TAWAG NG MGA TV EXECUTIVES SA CONDO NILA?
AT KUNG GUSTO MONG MAG-EAVESDROP SA UMPUKAN NG SHOWBIZ E KAILANGAN MO MUNANG MAGPANGGAP NA BADING.
HI, SISTERS!
AY! BAKLANG KALBO!
SAGWA

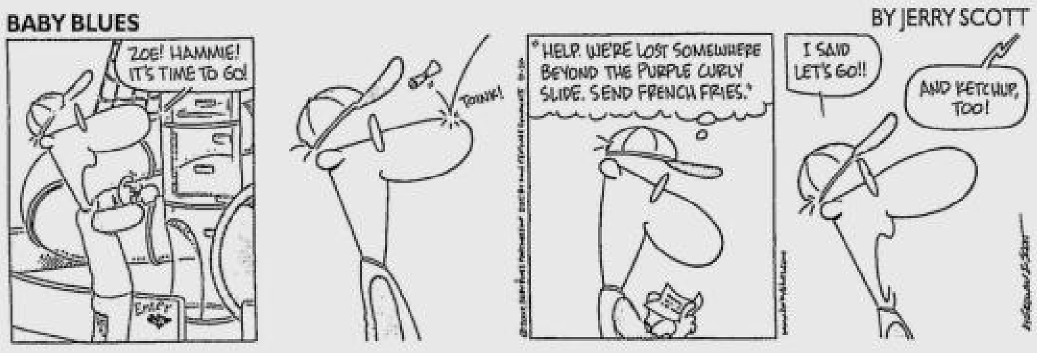
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


I AM A HAUNTED HAMBURGER!
OH, NO!
I ORDERED FRENCH FRIES WITH MY HAUNTED HAMBURGER!
10-26
JIM DAVIS

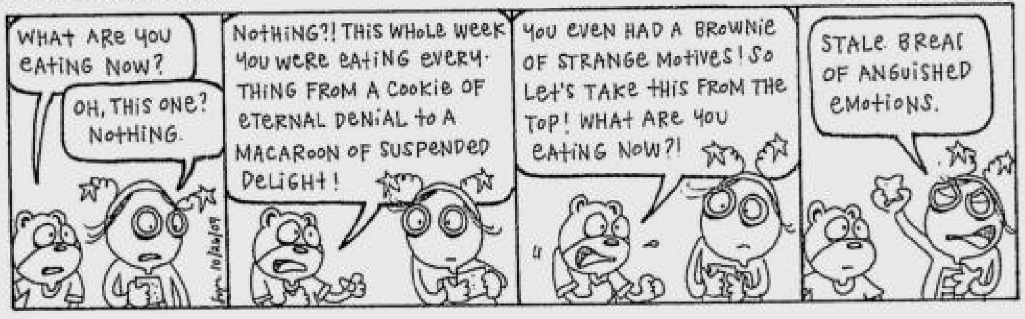
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE! HAMMIE! IT'S TIME TO GO!
TOINK!
"HELP. WE'RE LOST SOMEWHERE BEYOND THE PURPLE CURLY SLIDE. SEND FRENCH FRIES."
I SAID LET'S GO!!
AND KETCHUP, TOO!

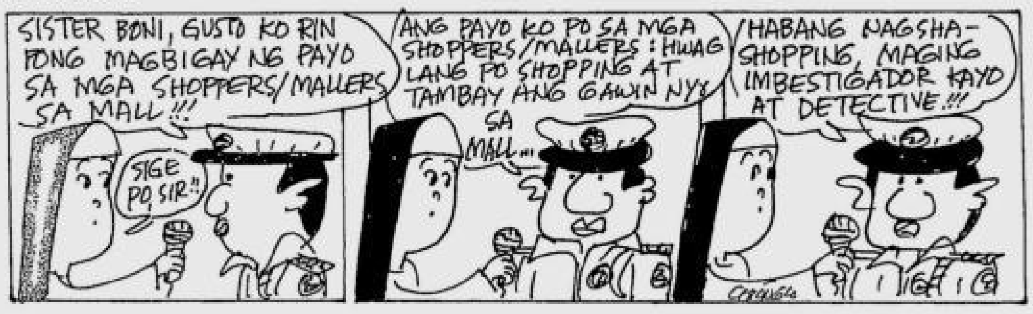
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHAT ARE YOU EATING NOW?
OH, THIS ONE? NOTHING.
NOTHING?! THIS WHOLE WEEK YOU WERE EATING EVERYTHING FROM A COOKIE OF ETERNAL DENIAL TO A MACAROON OF SUSPENDED DELIGHT!
YOU EVEN HAD A BROWNIE OF STRANGE MOTIVES! SO LET'S TAKE THIS FROM THE TOP! WHAT ARE YOU EATING NOW?!
STALE BREAD OF ANGUISHED EMOTIONS.

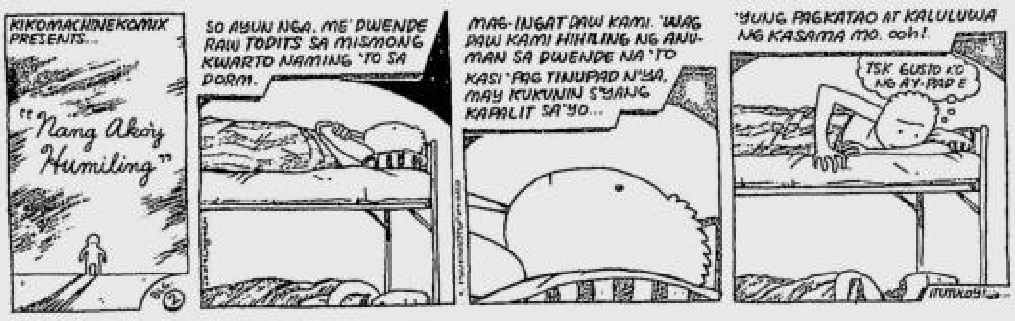
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SISTER BONI, GUSTO KO RIN PONG MAGBIGAY NG PAYO SA MGA SHOPPERS/MALLERS SA MALL!!!
SIGE PO SIR!!
ANG PAYO KO PO SA MGA SHOPPERS/MALLERS: HWAG LANG PO SHOPPING AT TAMBAY ANG GAWIN NYO SA MALL...
HABANG NAGSHA-SHOPPING, MAGING IMBESTIGADOR KAYO AT DETECTIVE!!!
CHIONGLO

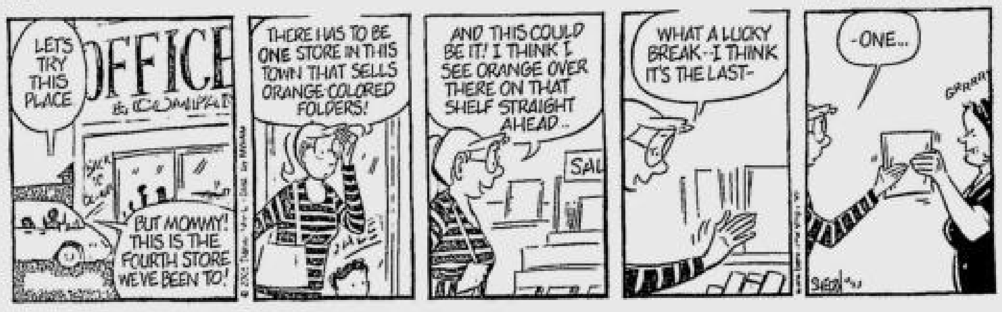
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KIKOMACHINEKOMIX PRESENTS...
"Nang Ako'y Humiling"
SO AYUN NGA, ME' DWENDE RAW TODITS SA MISMONG KWARTO NAMING 'TO SA DORM.
MAG-INGAT DAW KAMI. 'WAG DAW KAMI HIHILING NG ANU-MAN SA DWENDE NA 'TO KASI 'PAG TINUPAD N'YA, MAY KUKUNIN S'YANG KAPALIT SA'YO...
'YUNG PAGKATAO AT KALULUWA NG KASAMA MO. ooh!
TSK. GUSTO KO NG AY-PAD E

BEN

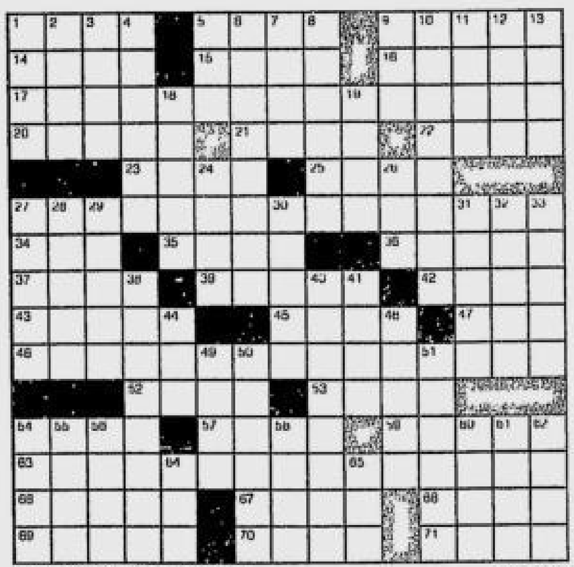
BY DANIEL SHELTON


LET'S TRY THIS PLACE
OFFICE & COMPANY
BUT MOMMY! THIS IS THE FOURTH STORE WE'VE BEEN TO!
THERE HAS TO BE ONE STORE IN THIS TOWN THAT SELLS ORANGE-COLORED FOLDERS!
AND THIS COULD BE IT! I THINK I SEE ORANGE OVER THERE ON THAT SHELF STRAIGHT AHEAD...
SAL
WHAT A LUCKY BREAK--I THINK IT'S THE LAST-
-ONE...
GRRR

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Took off
5 Decides
9 Pandemonium
14 Concept
15 Champagne word
16 Snake charmer's snake
17 Bad behavior at work?
20 Basil-based sauce
21 Account
22 Bistro
23 "Picnic" playwright
25 Bard villain
27 Overlook the vampire in a census?
34 Table scrap
35 Tabula __
36 Conundrum
37 Apply haphazardly
39 Singer Haggard
42 BMW rival
43 Eventually become
45 Kind of cracker
47 Turkish title
48 Parts played by magician's assistants?
52 Unconvincing
53 Equipment
54 Symphony member
57 Elevator pioneer
59 Foundations
63 Captive who's got it wrong?
66 Go off script
67 Flat-bottomed boat
68 Gymnast Korbut
69 Bright hues
70 London gallery
71 Balance

DOWN
1 Like a cooked noodle
2 Emmy winner Falco
3 Own (up)
4 Means to an end
5 Japanese sash
6 Make-believe
7 Rocklike lake deposit
8 Impassive
9 Dosage amts.
10 Winter warmer
11 Rhyme scheme
12 Composer of "Carmina Burana"
13 Protected
18 Pay homage to
19 Trepidation
24 U.S. territory
26 Interval
27 Internet connector
28 Tabriz resident
29 Small earrings
30 Foot bones
31 Customary
32 Climber's way-stop
33 Lyric highlights
38 News flash
40 Unlikely winner
41 Upper hand
44 Pod find
46 Some North Africans
49 Berserk
50 Can't bear
51 Soapbox percher
54 Gulf sultanate
55 Tarry
56 Capital on a fjord
58 Andes empire
60 Store lure
61 Early birds?
62 Insert firmly
64 Midsection muscles
65 Have bills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By Arlan & Linda Bushman
Chicago, IL

10/26/07

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

H	A	I	G	■	A	S	A	P	■	G	E	S	S	O
A	R	N	E	■	L	A	L	O	■	U	S	H	E	R
R	E	D	M	E	A	T	I	S	■	S	T	E	A	D
S	T	R	I	V	E	■	■	I	R	T	■	A	T	E
H	E	I	N	E	■	N	O	T	B	A	D	F	O	R
■	■	■	I	N	C	L	U	S	I	V	E	■	■	■
E	T	A	■	S	O	R	T	■	■	■	A	L	M	A
Y	O	U	N	O	W	B	L	U	E	G	R	E	E	N
E	D	G	E	■	■	■	A	D	A	H	■	O	T	T
■	■	■	S	P	O	N	S	O	R	E	D	■	■	■
M	E	A	T	T	H	A	T	S	■	T	O	M	B	S
E	L	I	■	B	O	B	■	■	S	T	U	A	R	T
C	I	S	C	O	■	B	A	D	F	O	R	Y	O	U
C	E	L	I	A	■	E	L	L	A	■	E	B	A	N
A	L	E	R	T	■	D	L	I	X	■	R	E	D	S

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10/26/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You work well with groups. In particular, you love to join forces with others to introduce reform, especially social reform. You're highly responsible. You understand how power works in the social structure. You're very courageous, and you have excellent organizational skills and planning abilities. In the next year, you might let go of something you've been involved with for about nine years.

Birthdate of: Keith Urban, singer; Pat Sajak, TV host; Hilary Rodham Clinton, politician

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Discussions with others are very much to the point today. Both parties want to get down to brass tacks. You won't just skim along the surface of things. (No way.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're very productive at work today. In large measure, this is because your powers of concentration are excellent. Whatever job you pick, you'll stick with it until it's finished.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your mind is in a playful, prankish mood today. You might want to read or watch murder mysteries, or play a practical joke on a friend. (Just for fun.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Discussions with family members are intense today. However, this is a good day to tackle repairs at home, especially if they're related to bathrooms, plumbing or garbage areas.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You have the mind of a sleuth today. You can practically read the thoughts of other people. You'll be able to spot a phony a mile away.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might see another source of income that is possible. Listen to your own moneymaking ideas. Why not run something up the flagpole to see if anyone salutes?

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Today you have a love of mystery and a desire to solve puzzles. Basically, it's because you want to penetrate beneath the surface layer of things.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You couldn't get a better day to do research. Your mind has energy, drive and focus. Nothing is too much trouble. You'll look under every rock.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Discussions with others will be personal and quite penetrating. Someone might ask you about the truth of something, or vice versa. You're sure to learn something.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Discussions with parents, teachers and authority figures will be both playful and yet very much on the edge. You might not be sure of how to take someone. Is this person kidding or not?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a marvelous day to study anything. You have a genuine curiosity about learning something new, especially related to publishing, the media, higher education or travel.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Discussions about how to share something might go very well today. Your mind is so sharp, you won't miss a thing!

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu

By Dave Green

	6			3			9	
			8		2			
		8	9		7	6		
	1	5				2	8	
3								1
	9	4				7	6	
		6	5		3	4		
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	2			7			3	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

10/26

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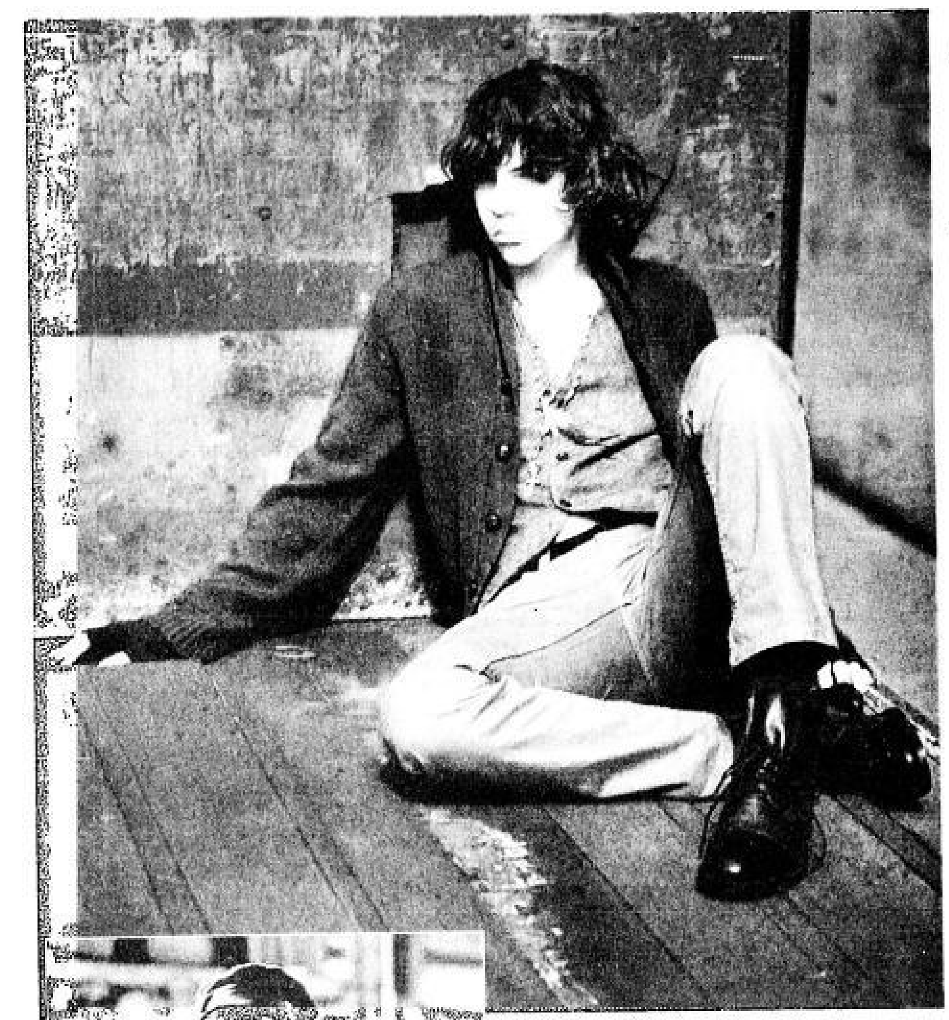
HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	4	5	7	9	6	8	3	2
7	8	2	3	4	1	6	5	9
9	6	3	5	2	8	7	4	1
4	1	8	6	7	2	5	9	3
2	9	6	4	3	5	1	8	7
5	3	7	1	8	9	4	2	6
8	2	1	9	6	4	3	7	5
6	7	4	2	5	3	9	1	8
3	5	9	8	1	7	2	6	4

Difficulty Level ★★★



Top choices

TOPMAN'S LATEST COLLECTION OFFERS uniformly mysterious and stylish looks.

The Atomic line is influenced by 1980s music and the style of such bands as Blondie. It focuses on graphic prints, bold color palettes and skinny silhouettes.

Animal prints reach across knitwear, jersey and denim, while sharp suit jackets and tailored waistcoats are paired with skinny jeans, rolled up to flood length. Shirt prints come in tiny geo dots and busy star prints in black and white, offset by dog-tooth Harrington jackets and striped polo-collared cardigans.

Protest March takes inspiration from the student strikes and Parisian riots of the late 1960s. Revolution-inspired graphics adorn T-shirts, and boldly patterned heavy-knit cardigans are twinned with grandad shirts. Wool trench coats and double-breasted cardigans add a smart edge to the trend. Heavy knit scarves, tweed caps, felt berets and leather belts accessorize the look.

Eastern Block, taking its cue from the free-spirited travelers of Eastern Europe, is all about layering anything with anything. The color palette is earthy, with browns and greens highlighted with oranges, purples, reds and blues.

Outerwear comes in variations of washed-out parkas and duffle coats worn over paisley hoodies or underneath oversized heavy knit cardigans. Patchwork check shirts are worn underneath tweed trenches or open to the chest with layers of wooden beads. Fingerless knitted gloves, woven mohair scarves and wool deerstalker hats are the key accessories.

Skin Deep's rebellion and antiestablishment vibe looks back to an age when youth wore clothing that manifested their tough attitude. Bomber jackets are paired with neat gingham and checked shirts buttoned high up to the neck.

Skinny blue jeans are worn tightly rolled up over high-lace boots and accessorized with braces and skinny ties. The smarter side of the trend focuses on sharp-cut suits in tonic and lacquered finishes worn with fine pinstripe shirts, animal-print belts and metallic ties.

Robinsons Specialty Stores, Inc. is the exclusive franchisee of Topman, Topshop, Warehouse, Wallis and Dorothy Perkins in the Philippines.

SHIRT with tiny geo dots and busy star prints in black and white, skinny black pants, and red leather belt

GRAPHIC-PRINT white T-shirt, '80s-inspired vest suit and black pants, accented with a bold-colored scarf

GRAY wool trench coat paired with black pants and a tweed cap

PLAID shirt under a wool jacket accented with a felt beret

SKINNY pants and a black shirt paired with a plaid waistcoat and red-and-black muffler to complete the rock band look

GOINGS ON

New kiddie line

KIDSPLANET IS A NEW LINE OF CHILDREN'S clothes exclusively available at Robinsons Department Store (RDS) in Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Manila and Robinsons Place Metro East. The store carries toddler T-shirts, shorts, khakis, skirts, blouses and capris. RDS is also holding the month-long Kids' Fair at all RDS branches nationwide. Discounts of up to 50 percent are given at the Kids' Section. Every P300 worth of purchases from the Kids' Section gives shoppers a chance to win in the Mad Dash Raffle promo. One winner in every RDS branch can shop for P10,000 worth of merchandise at the Children's section.

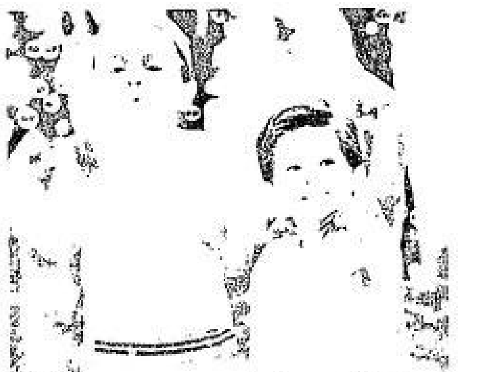
RP CARNIVAL TOUR. Global Fun Carnival gets ready to start its three-month Philippine tour this October at the SM Mall of Asia Complex. It is the first European-style carnival in Asia and offers a wide variety of rides for the adventurous and more laid-back and services. It aims to bring world-class excitement into each host city and provide a lifetime of memories for everyone. The Global Fun Carnival is open 5-10 p.m. weekdays and 11 a.m.-12 midnight weekends, Oct 27-Jan. 15.

LAUNCH. Aescultura, the country's premiere world-class beauty and wellness clinic will be formally launched today at the Future Plaza One, Panay Avenue, QC.

PSYCHIC FESTIVAL. Starmall Edsa is holding the Psychic Festival at 4 p.m., Oct. 28. Those interested in knowing their future can consult the various seers participating in the event. Admission is free. Call 7244992.

NO TRICKS, ALL TREATS. A magic show, fun games, celebrity kid show, loot bags, and prizes await guests participating in Best in Costume contest in the Robinsons Malls Halloween Treat 1-5:30 p.m., Oct. 28. The annual event is open to kids 5-12 years old. They must register in participating Robinsons Malls nearest to them (6836100, locals 782, 780, 137).

RAFFLE PROMO. Finds Supermarket at Starmall Las Piñas is giving away color television sets, digital video disc players, washing machines through its Lifestyle Raffle Bonanza. For every P1,000 worth of purchase, a customer gets two raffle coupons. Promo period is until Dec. 15. Grand draw is at 5 p.m., Dec. 16. Also being given away are gift certificates for Cuba Libre Latin Bar and Restaurant, MySpa Wellness and MySpa Fitness. Call 8741304.



BUBBLY and fun fashion for kids at all RDS outlets until Oct. 31

SPECIAL RAFFLE. Makati Shangri-La's Circles Event Café presents Nissan Patrol Super Safari Raffle, Oct. 20-Dec. 31. Dine as a group with at least five members for lunch or dinner buffet and get a raffle stub for a chance to win the top-of-the-line luxury SUV. Call 8400884 or 8138888 local 7588/7599.

REPEAT RUNS FOR MUSICALE. Kaisa's 20th anniversary musical revue, "Tsinoy - Kaisa Ka!," will have repeat runs 3 and 7:30 p.m., Nov. 4; and 7:30 p.m., Nov. 6. Star performer is José Mari Chan. The revue is the first time the Tsinoy life story is depicted in a unique theater production. It features 14 new songs. The musicale will be presented at the Awat Keng Auditorium, Kaisa-Angelo King Heritage Center, 32 Anda cor. Cabildo Sts., Intramuros, Manila. Call 5266796 or 4280512; e-mail kaisadotph@yahoo.com.

CONVENTION. The Philippine Academy of Clinical and Cosmetic Dermatology will hold its 4th annual convention, Oct. 25-26, at Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong, with the theme "New Insights on Old Skin Problems and Cosmetic Concerns. Call 7144284 or e-mail paccd_2003@yahoo.com.

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"I'm down 2 sizes because of Xando."

Being in the spotlight, I need to keep my body trim and fit. With Xando, it was easy to lose weight without changing my lifestyle. Best of all, there are no side effects– no palpitations, no upset stomachs. Xando's my license to enjoy food and my life!

Pat Daza
TV Host/
Media Executive

BEFORE AFTER

"Xando fits my needs and my lifestyle."

Joubert Yao
Operations Executive

BEFORE AFTER

Lorna Tolentino
Award winning actress/TV host

Boy Abunda

Kris Aquino

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NO APPROVED THERAPEUTIC CLAIMS

NOW AVAILABLE:
15's Trial Pack
For a limited time only.

DIETARY SUPPLEMENT

SEXY Carmi Martin with Facial Care Centre and Svenson top bosses George T. Sy, Robin Horsman and Peter Prestidge

HOST Boy Abunda with Fe Reyes and Brazilian model Lucas Gil. Back: FCC beauties Cherie Gil, Lyn Ching-Pascual, Dawn Zulueta-Lagdameo, Amina Aranaz-Alunan and Ana Roces

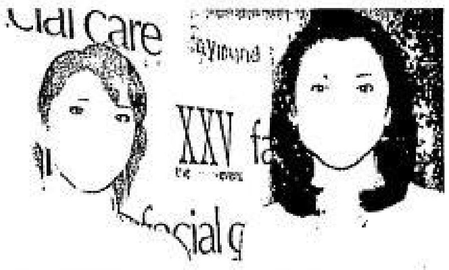
PATRICK Sy, Gennie Bata, Nivea's Rica King, Sam Sy and event hostess Mimi Sy

Beautiful jubilee of sorts

FORTUNE Ledesma, Marivel Carandang and Carrie Lim, wife of PCCI president Samie Lim

JAMES Yap, Kris Aquino and Angeline Siy-Fiechter

VIPs: Gov. Vilma Santos-Recto with Sen. Loren Legarda


GORGEOUS sisters Cricket Yu Tantoco and Francis Yu

CHICHO Suarez, GP Reyes and Kat Cruz

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

THEY CAME IN DROVES TO ONE OF the biggest beauty events of the year, dahlings. No less than the popular Facial Care Centre and in-demand photographer **Raymund Isaac** celebrated their respective 25th anniversary in a joint cocktail party.

It was raining food and booze during XXV: The Beauty Event. There were various A-listers and loads of hot personalities. *Moi* was blown away by the elaborate preparation, as Ayala Museum was transformed into one big party place, *palanggas*.

Gov. **Vilma Santos-Recto** and Sen. **Loren Legarda** led the ribbon-snipping; they were assisted by Facial Care president and taipan **George T. Sy** and man of the hour Raymund Isaac.

The gorgeous Facial Care Centre women included **Čarmi Martin, Cherie Gil, Ana Roces, Lyn Ching-Pascual, Dawn Zulueta, Amina Aranaz-Alunan** and **Patty Betita**, who were all stunning, *palanggas*.

The place was all abuzz during the raffle of 25 fantastic prizes, including Rustan's jewelry from Tiffany's, Louis Vuitton latest waterproof keep-all bag, and a beauty program from Facial Care Centre and Marie France worth an awesome P100,000.

When asked for a few words, the gorgeous invitees had these to say:

Dawn Zulueta: "I am forever grateful to Marie France and Facial Care Centre for the wonderful opportunities given to me. What a fabulous party!"

Aiko Melendez: "Thank you for making me a part of the Marie France Group of Companies. You are my new family!"

Amina Aranaz-Alunan: "We were blown away by everything! I'm really honored to have been a part of the FCC family all these years."

Ana Roces: "I was caught off-guard with the event and my poster. Congratulations to Facial Care!"

And *moi*: "I'm so proud to be with the renowned Svenson International *famille* of Facial Care, *naturellement*."

The sizzling night gave us a glimpse of how the next 25 years would look like for Raymund and Facial Care Centre—totally bigger! Bolder! And more beautiful! *natch*, dahlings.

3-way partnership

That fab clan of three—Shu Uemura, Motorola, and Globe Platinum—celebrated their partnership in Evolution, which showcased the three brands as marketing partners.

Held at the NBC Tent in Fort Bonifacio, Evolution was successfully dispatched to bring awareness and excitement towards beauty, mobile phone technology and communications, *natch*.

Shu Uemura gave beauty devotees a stunning feel on what true makeup artistry, ignited by nature and science, could achieve. *Après* which sexy sultry singer **Skarlet** dazzled us with her wow! version of "Diamonds are Forever." Her act was followed by performances by the Air Dance Philippines and the exciting Capoeira company.

Manila Symphony Orchestra and **DJ Silverfilter** sizzled the tent with a mix of sensational sound.

Evolution also marked the first year anniversary of Shu Uemura Rouge Unlimited Lipsticks, *palanggas*.

Motorola then launched its next must-have: the iconic RAZR2, a super mobile phone that's slimmer, stronger, and sleeker in design, while, Globe Platinum celebrated its second venture, with a new modern logo, a symbol of endless perks and privileges.

For a grand finale, dahlings, the gang of three gave away fabulous prizes. Fifty guests who posed the best with the life-size Rouge Unlimited prop went home with renovated eyelash curler and Rouge Unlimited choices.

Motorola energized the crowd with the "Meet Your Match" game. Each of the winning 25 pairs won an RAZR2.

Globe pumped up the crowd as balloons with exclusive gift prizes inside were quickly popped, and our adrenaline soared even higher from this truly awesome event, *palanggas*.

Citibank, Citigold host briefing

Citibank Philippines hosted a *tres* important Midyear Economic Outlook Briefing at the elegant Mandarin Oriental Hotel for the clients of Citigold, its wealth management banking service in the country, no less, *palanggas*.

The exclusive gathering reflected Citibank's commitment to make financial education more accessible to its customers, by providing them with a venue where they can learn about the latest in the regional and global markets.

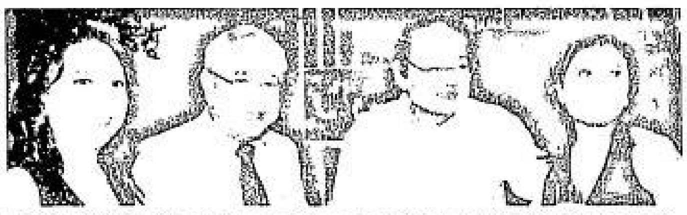
Welcoming the chosen invitees were Citibank Phils. Hot country business manager, tall, handsome **Mark Jones**, and the bank's brilliant retail banking director **Michellina Triwardhany** and Citigold wealth management director **Judith Go**, dahlings.

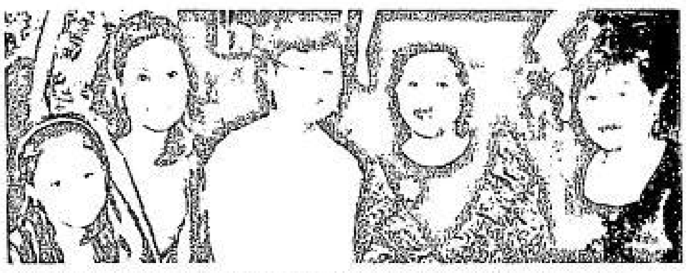
During the get-together it was announced that Citibank once again was cited by global publication Reader's Digest in its annual Trusted Brands program, *palanggas*. This is the second year (the first was last year). In 2006, it was a Gold award winner; this year, it was elevated to the Platinum category.

"The key to our continued success is providing our clients all over the world with comprehensive, up-to-date reports on market performances and giving them expert financial guide to help them make informed investment decisions," said Mark Jones in his welcome address.

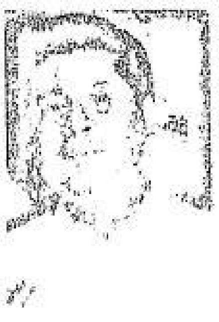
Après the investment briefing, Citigold gave exclusive gift items to the invitees and raffled off prizes, like 150,000 rewards points which can be converted to air miles, plus, plus, *palanggas*.

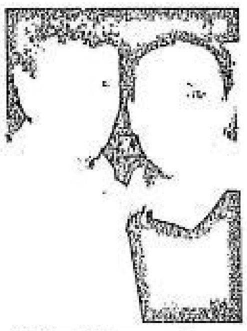
Call 9959999 in Metro Manila and 2349999 outside of Manila.

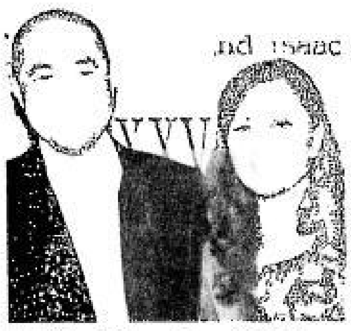

ROSETTE Carrillo and lawyer Napoleon Rama with GMA-7 Head of Community Relations Rod Cornejo and Michelle Wu


DAUGHTER Audrey with mom Ruth Co, Aida Coliangco, Agnes Uygonco and Angela Carlos

RAFA Alunan

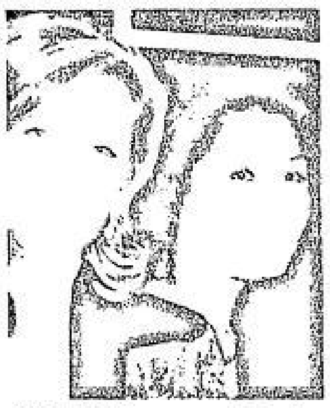

DAVAO Congressman Anton Lagdameo

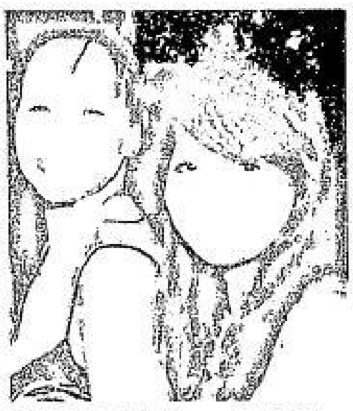

Moi and Raymund Isaac


FELIC and Grace Ang of CATS

EVA Abesamis

PREVIEW's Agoo Bengzon

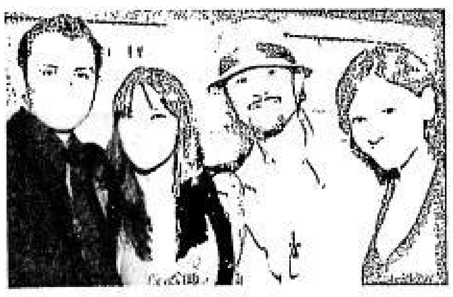

SHARON Horsman and Candy Rivera


GEORGINA Balliet and Facial Care Centre's Riza del Rosario

GABBY Katigbak, Tessa Dragon, Coco Domingo, Tina Tinio, Mari Litonjua and Cynthia Mangahas

CITIGOLD Wealth Management Director Judith Go

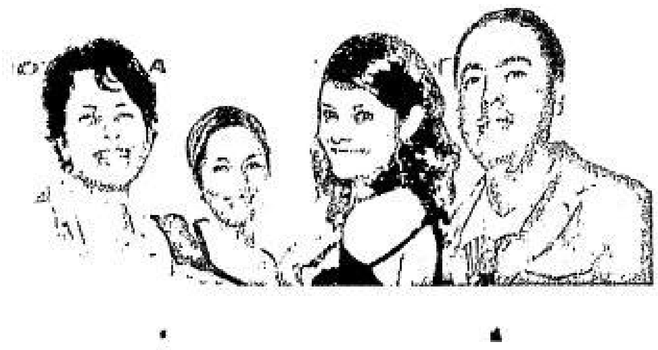
CITIGOLD clients Vashu and Vijay Dargani with Citigold relationship manager Vivian Tan-Cua


MAC Lubaczewski, Joey Mead, Ian King and Claudine Trillo

MICHAEL Salientes and Zen resto's Maryann Tinio

CITIBANK's Mark Jones, Jamie Go, Michellina Triwardhany and Paul Hodes

PJ Garcia, Lieven Debruyne and Ramon Tejero


LORRAINE Belmonte; with Celine Lopez, Helena Belmonte and Chut Cuerva

ENTERTAINMENT
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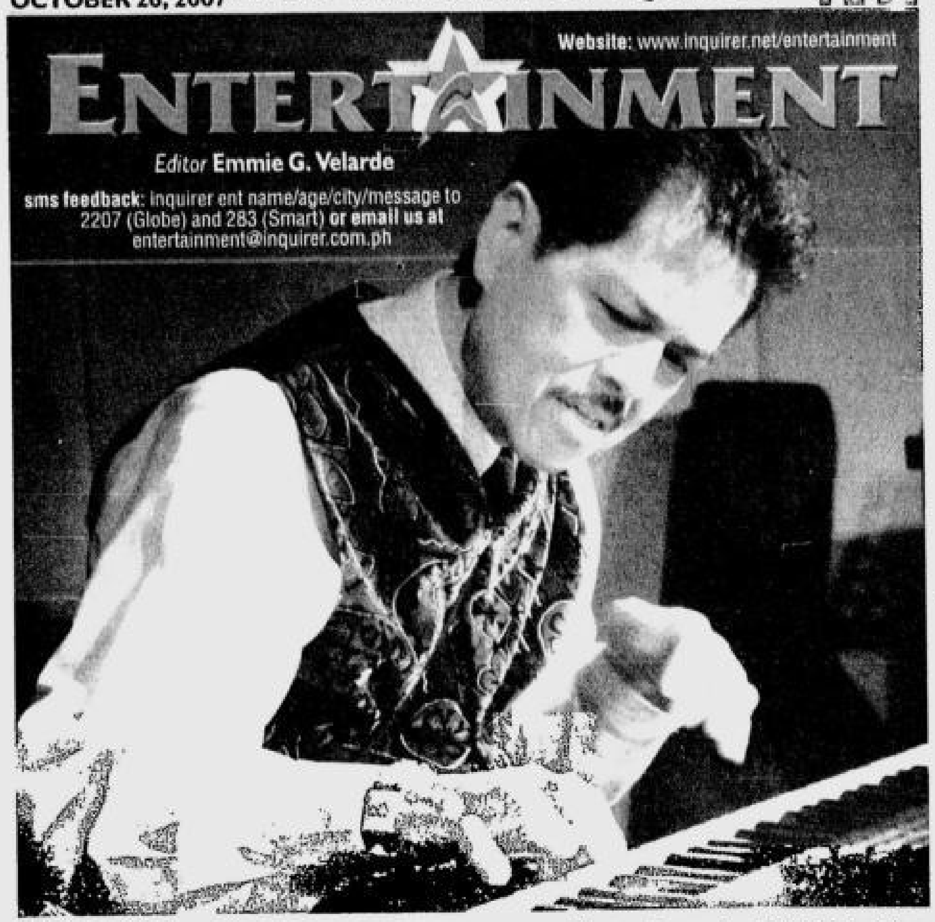
Editor Emmie G. Velarde
sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at entertainment@inquirer.com.ph



"DEATH follows me around," the keyboard master says, "but so do angels of life." He's doing a series of shows that reunites him with Anna Fegi, starting tomorrow night.

Toti Fuentes back at the keyboards

LAST YEAR, A CANCER-stricken, wheelchair-bound Toti Fuentes thought his time was up. Suffering from a rare stomach ailment since 1999, the 55-year-old US-based keyboard virtuoso was rushed to the hospital thrice.

Even now, Toti told INQUIRER Entertainment, "I feel death follows me around all the time. On the other hand, I have more angels of life around me as well. When I was in the hospital, these angels came to my rescue."

The cancer is reportedly now in remission, thanks in part to an experimental treatment program that Toti undergoes as a volunteer in a Chicago hospital. Most wonderful of all, he's back doing what he loves most: playing music.

Though still gaunt-looking, Toti says he feels rejuvenated and ready for an upcoming series of shows in Manila. The stint, aptly called "Perfect Pair," reunites him with singer Anna Fegi, with whom he shares a few remarkable connections.

Both are Visayan and received musical training at an early age. Toti, born in Cagayan de Oro, learned to play the piano at six. His parents saw him as a prodigy and sent him to the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music for college.

Ana, a native of Cebu, was under the tutelage of a music-loving teacher who gave her prime exposure in concerts and plays while attending the University of San Jose-Recoletos.

Determined to pursue a musical career, Toti hooked up with Rico J. Puno, who was then building a reputation at the Spindle in 1974. When Rico broke into the pop scene, Toti became his regular pianist in concerts and recordings. Toti also did session work with the Apo, Hajji Alejandro, Basil Valdez, Pilita Corrales and other popular artists.

By 1978, Toti was evolving as a jazz musi-

TOTI FUENTES/ H2

CHEER FACTOR

THE SHY ONE Award-winning Actress Jodie Foster reacts to a question from the press during a promotional event in Tokyo last week for her latest film, "The Brave One." REUTERS

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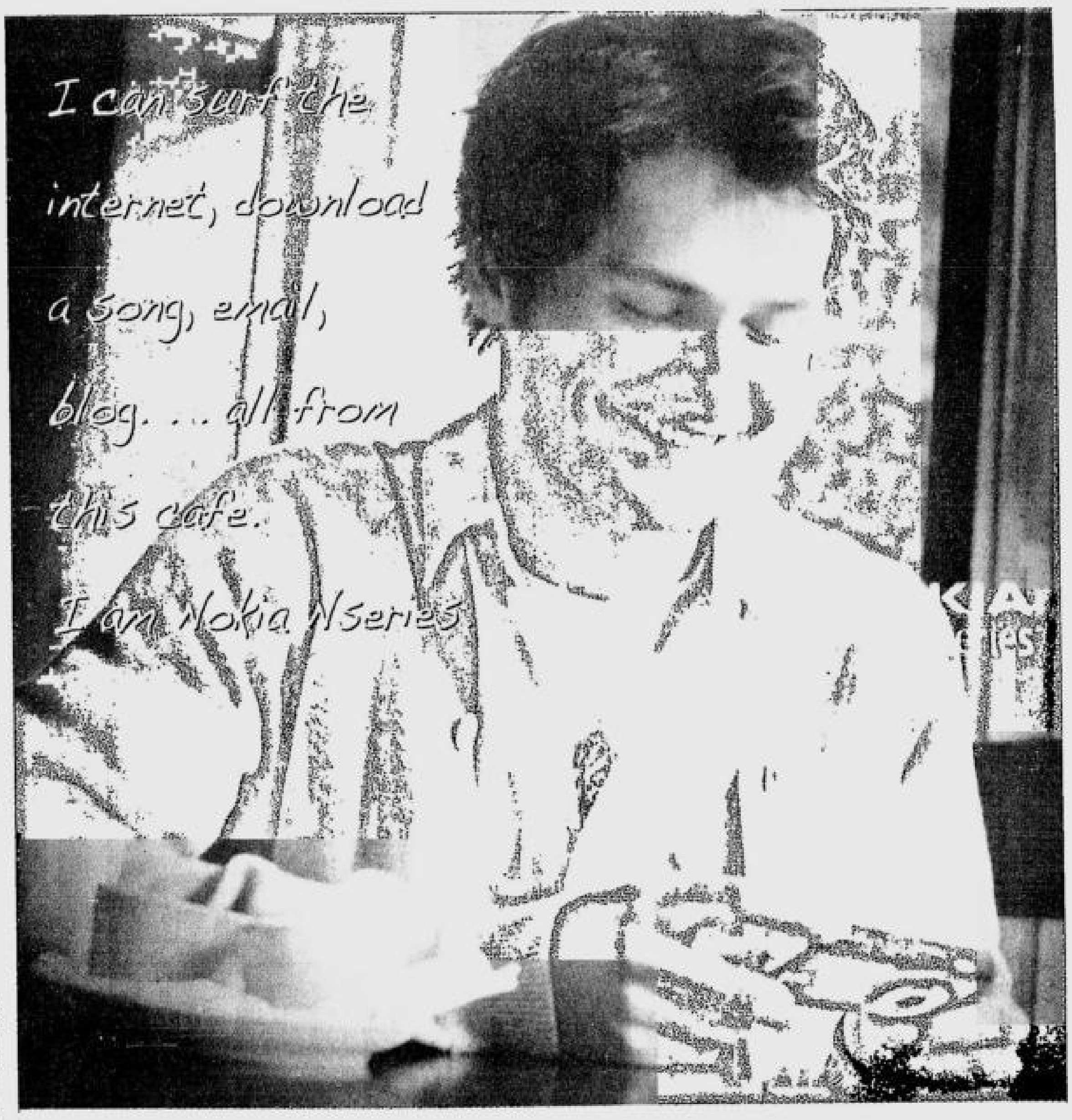
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Hollow Bones
Shorts: Lesbian Film (14 mins)
Asian Premiere
Alex is plagued by bad dreams. After returning home from hospital after a long illness she's struggling to assimilate back into the strange, suburban world around her. She befriends a fellow outsider, Marianne, who challenges her perspectives. A short film about death, friendships and birds.

Outland
Shorts: Gay Film (25 minutes)
Asian Premiere
Max has a shameful secret - he's a science fiction fan. He thinks he's got it covered with his potential new boyfriend, but his friends from the Outland science fiction club have other ideas. They're on their way over.
Outland has an all-star cast, and is quite possibly the best gay and lesbian science fiction fan club themed short film ever made!

Ready or Not
Documentary Short (17mins)
Asian Premiere
Ready or Not explores the struggle to be true to yourself through raw, real and life affirming stories. Through coming out on national television, falling in love, and getting married to avoid burning in hell, three women explore the unforgettable events that led to a happier life...

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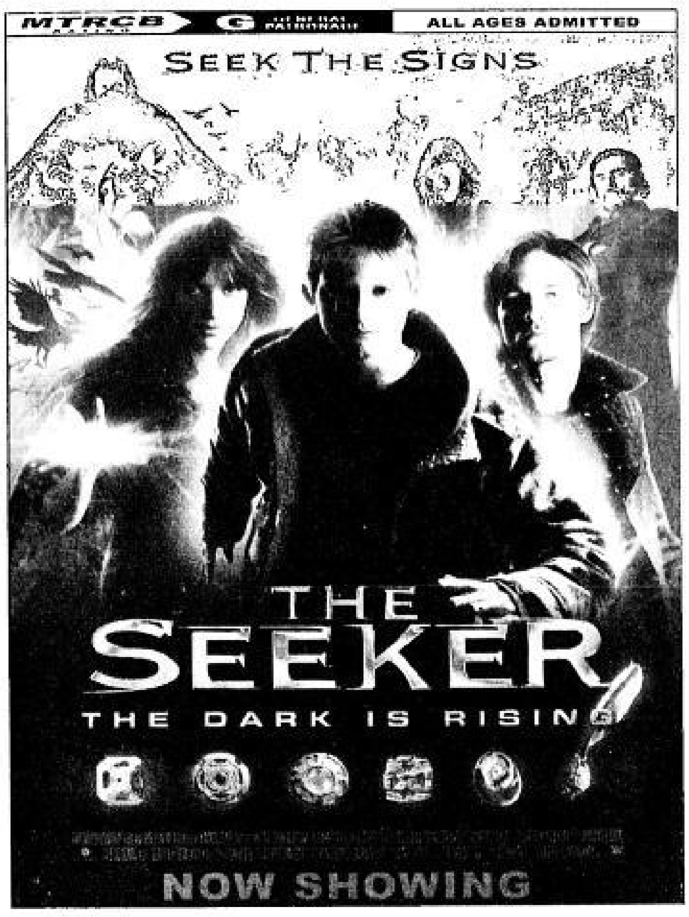
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① CINE EUROPA

② BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL (PG-13) 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

③ RENDITION MTRCB PG-13 12:45, 3:40, 6:35, 9:30

④ STARDUST MTRCB GP
THE SEEKER MTRCB: GP

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10

October 19 - 31
Cinema 1, Shang Cineplex
Level 6, Shangri-La Plaza

October 24 (Wednesday)	
Closely Watched Trains	12:00 PM
Family & Alexander	2:00 PM
The Kiss	5:30 PM
Summer with the Ghost	7:45 PM
Dead Man's Hand	9:40 PM
October 25 (Thursday)	
The Umbrellas of Cherbourg	12:00 PM
La Mome	2:00 PM
FC Venus	5:00 PM
Kolya	7:20 PM
Leap	9:40 PM
October 26 (Friday)	
Taming the Shrew	12:00 PM
Ellis in Glamourland	2:30 PM
You am I	4:30 PM
Karakter	6:30 PM
Facing Windows	9:00 PM
October 27 (Saturday)	
Shooting Dogs	12:00 PM
Taming of the Shrew	2:30 PM
Carol's Journey	5:00 PM
Jalla!Jalla!	7:15 PM
Meeting the Enemy	9:15 PM
October 28 (Sunday)	
Summer with the Ghost	12:00 PM
Dead Man's Hand	2:00 PM
Fanny & Alexander	4:00 PM
The Kiss	7:30 PM
Closely Watched Trains	9:40 PM
October 29 (Monday)	
Jalla!Jalla!	12:00 PM
The Leopard	2:15 PM
Facing Windows	5:45 PM
Just Sex & Nothing Else	8:00 PM
Lives of Others	10:00
October 30 (Tuesday)	
Leap	12:00 PM
La Mome	2:00 PM
The Umbrellas of Cherbourg	4:50 PM
Kolya	6:50 PM
FC Venus	9:15 PM
October 31 (Wednesday)	
Just Sex & Nothing Else	12:00 PM
Karakter	2:00 PM
Carol's Journey	4:45 PM
Summer in Berlin	7:00 PM
The Leopard	9:15 PM

FREE ADMISSION
Seats on a first come, first served basis.

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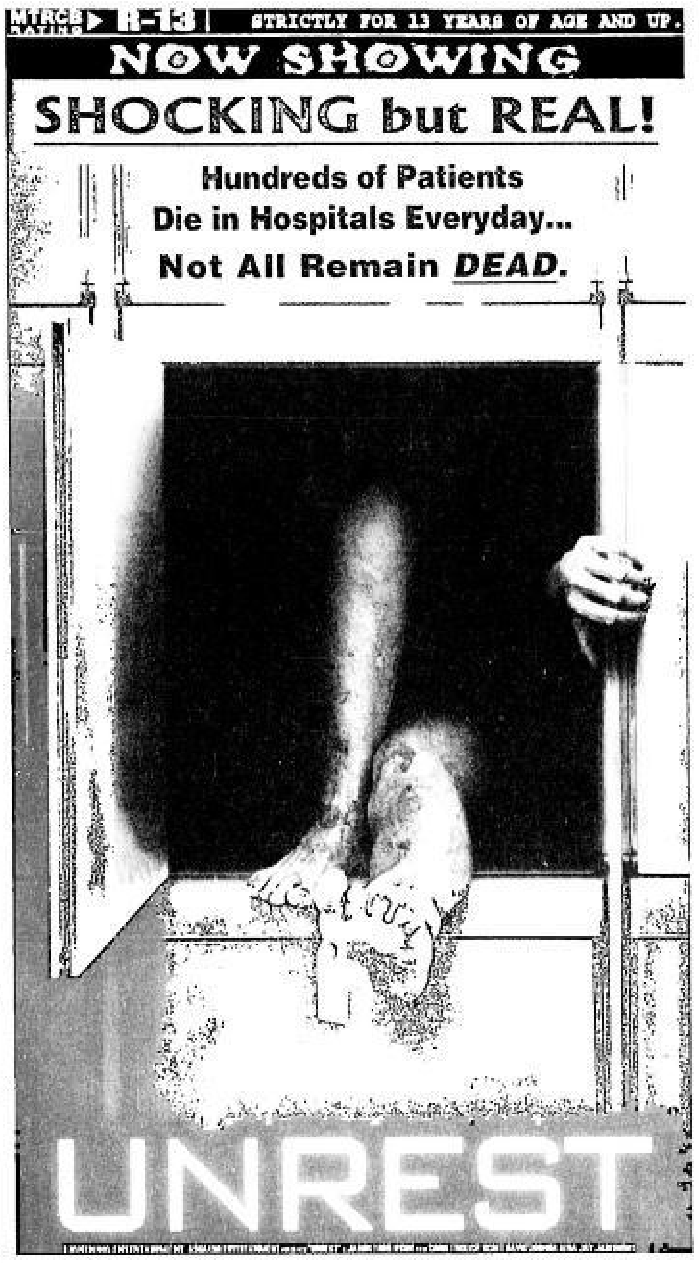
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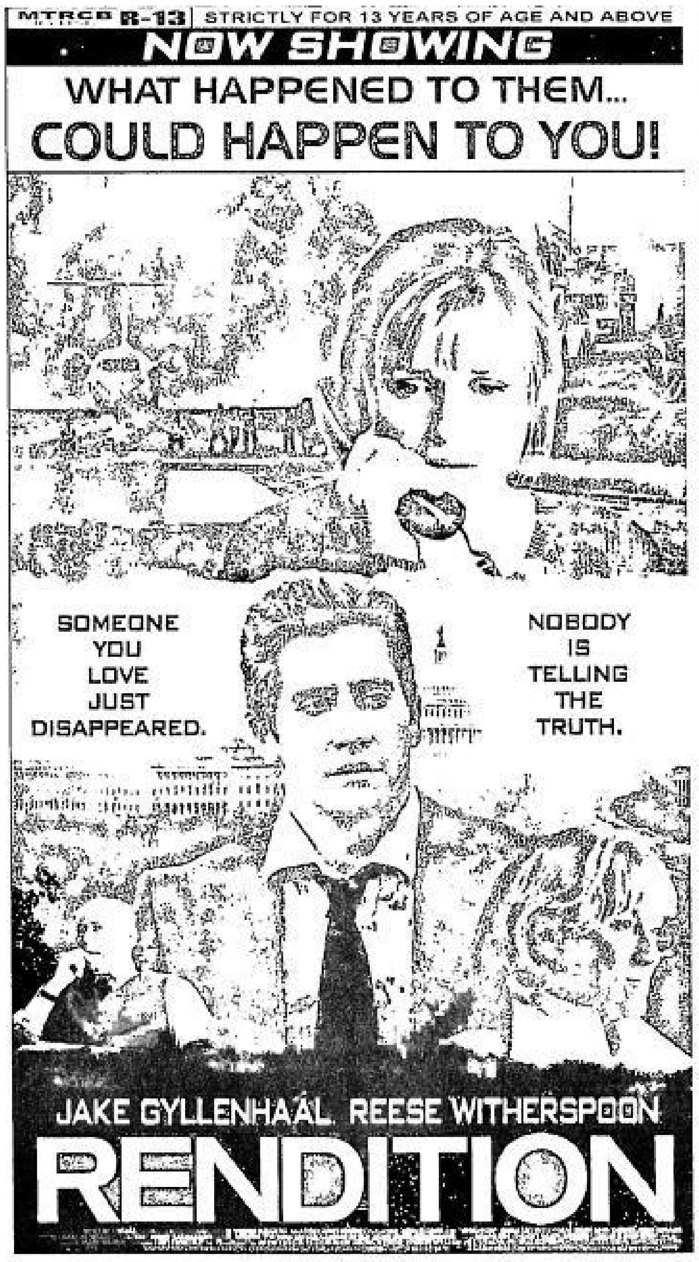
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WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM...
COULD HAPPEN TO YOU!
SOMEONE YOU LOVE JUST DISAPPEARED.
NOBODY IS TELLING THE TRUTH.
JAKE GYLLENHAAL REESE WITHERSPOON
RENDITION

ANNA Fegi as Nala in Hong Kong Disney's "The Lion King." It was a tough job, she says.

Toti Fuentes back...

From page H1

cian and wanted to get into "the source," as he called it. He went to the US, where he would spend the next 20 years as a working musician—playing with the likes of Sergio Mendes, Natalie Cole, Anita Baker, Julia Fordham, Aretha Franklin, Andy Williams and many others.

Toti was in Manila in the late '90s when Ana became his protege. "She was brought to my attention by her manager Bibsy Carballo. I recognized her talent [right away]," Toti recalled. "I helped her by recording minus-one arrangements of some 40 songs, including my originals and a Motown medley, which she used in her performances.

Like Toti in the US, Ana found work abroad as a professional artist. She was in the cast of the theater musical "Hair" in Japan and "Rent" in Singapore, among others. She just finished a 20-month run as Nala in the Hong Kong Disneyland production of "Lion King."

Looking back on their overseas work stints, Toti and Ana attribute their success to dogged determination and discipline.

Toti logged on several years as a session musician in Los Angeles, hoping to play with his idol, Sergio Mendes. When they finally met, it didn't take long before Sergio asked Toti to join him on a concert tour.

As for Ana, she said appearing in "Lion King" has prepared her for any tough assignment in the future. "It was a 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. job, five times a week, which I had never experienced. I had to be physically fit for all the running, dancing, jumping and climbing we did onstage."

* * *

(The "Perfect Pair" series starts tomorrow and resumes Nov. 8, 10 and 15 at Merk's Greenbelt 3, Makati. It moves to Captain's Bar of the Mandarin Hotel, Makati on Nov. 20.)

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THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING G 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10	BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL PG13 1:40,3:50,6:00, 8:10,10:20	STARDUST G 12:40,2:55,5:15, 7:35,10:00
KNOCKED UP R18 1:10,3:50	UNREST R13 1:30,3:40,5:50, 8:00,10:10	RENDITION 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30

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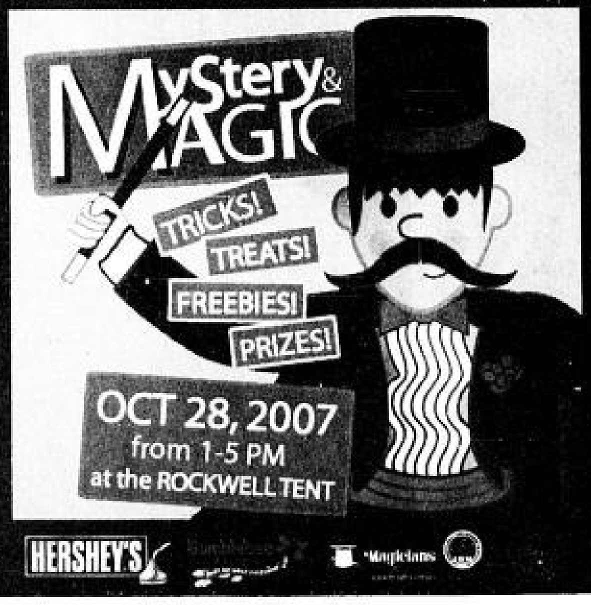
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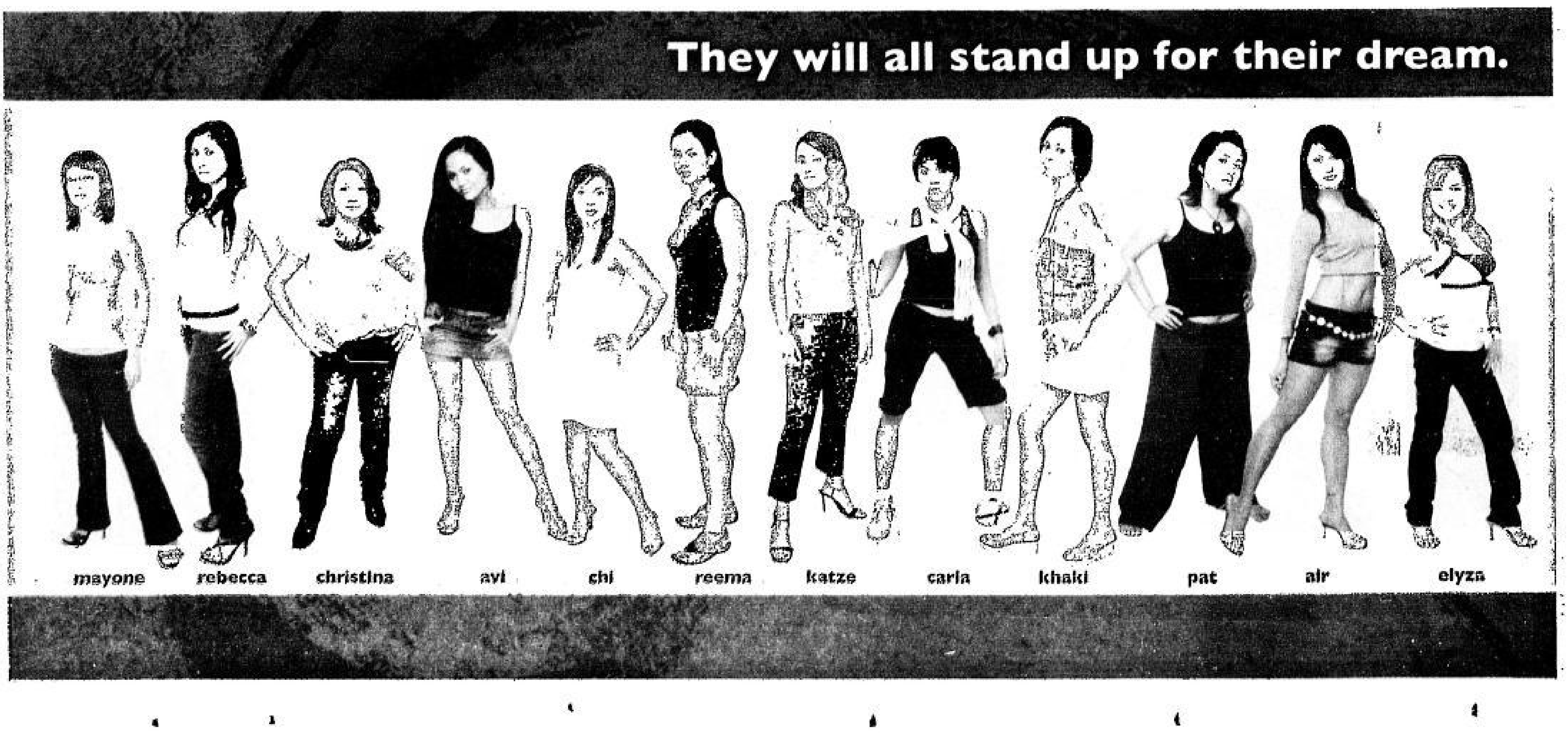
They will all stand up for their dream.
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avi
chi
reema
katze
carla
khaki
pat
air
elyza

Experimental poetry and music at Mag:net

SHOW TIME

JEAN MARIE SYJUCO AND RALPH WALKER present "Cesare & The Electric Underground Collective," featuring the experimental poetry and music of very special friends on Oct. 29, 8 p.m. at Mag:net Bonifacio High Street, The Fort.

The event stars Alfred Yuson, Maxine Syjuco, Trix Syjuco, Bob Balingit, Yanna Acosta & Project Ganymede, Danny Sillada, Eghai Roxas, Lirio Salvador & Elemento, Ria Munoz, Mat, Nina Beltran, J.P., Bleeding Boy Noise Orchestra, SkiRay, Parking in Mogadishu and The Blame, among others.

Visit www.cesarsyjuco.com.

"Cesare & The Electric Underground Collective"

Sunday double treat

Thunderbird Resorts in Binangonan, Rizal presents "Sunday Double Treat," a live music and comedy show on Oct. 28 featuring Luke Mejares and Alicia Mayer at the Cabana Bar at 9 p.m. and "Fist Fiesta," an outdoor boxing event at the 3rd level parking area at 3 p.m.

For details call 651-6888.

Halloween magic

Fil-Canadian magician Erik Mana goes onstage in "Alchemy in Wonderland: A Mad Trip Party" on Oct. 31 at Alchemy, Silver City Mall, Julia Vargas St., Pasig.

The show is a special Halloween take on the strange and unpredictable world of Lewis Carroll's famous children's book "Alice in Wonderland." It also features the music of DJs Jesse Garcia and Elmer Dado; Grupo Tribale and the ambience art of Pan Martinez. Gates open at 7 p.m. Call 633-0516; 706-1305 or log on to www.alchemyevents.info.

Tonight

Raymond Lauchengco launches his latest album, "Full Circle" (Viva Records), at Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong.

Louie Reyes, Ding Mercado and Eugene Villaluz at Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati.

Tribe of Levi at Bellevue Hotel, Filinvest, Alabang.

RAYMOND Lauchengco

First Circle at Manila Pavilion's Boulvar Sports & Music Bar.

Tomorrow

Retrospect and Tribe of Levi at Santana Grove, Sucat Road, Parañaque.

Shamrock, 6 p.m. at SM Bacoor.

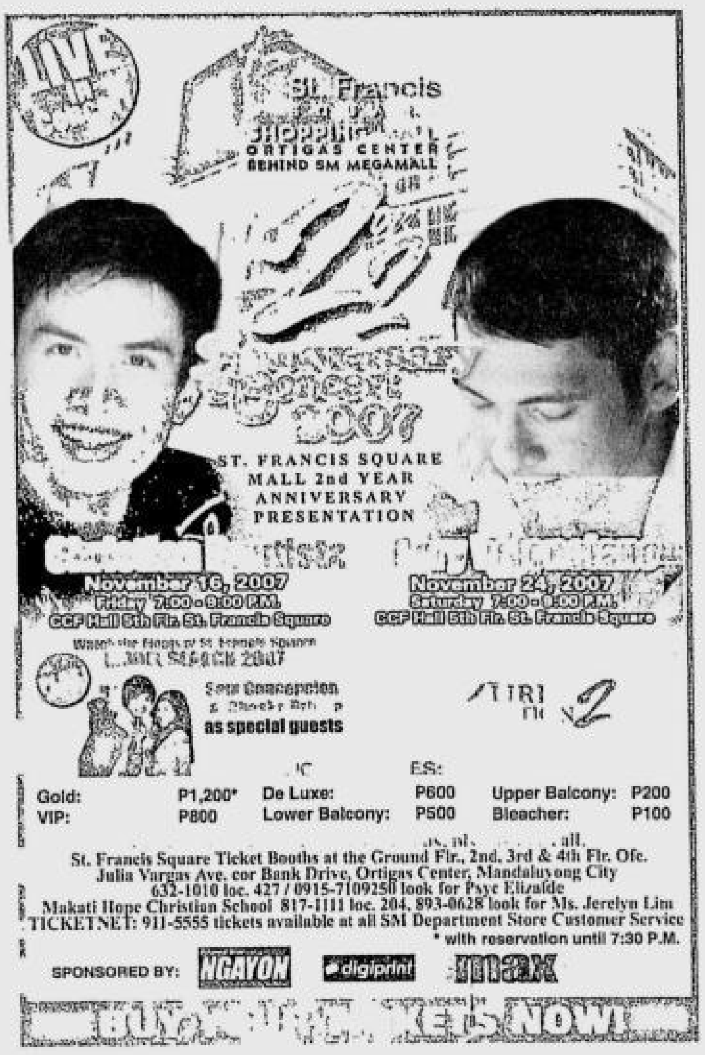
Sam Concepcion, 5 p.m. at SM Pampanga.

Freetstyle and True Faith at NE Pacific Mall Sidestrip, Cabanatuan City.

Fast Track at Manila Pavilion's Boulvar Sports & Music Bar.

Oct. 28

Jed Madela back-to-back with Ronnie Liang, 5 p.m. at SM Bicutan.



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CCF Hall 5th Flr. St. Francis Square

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Sam Concepcion
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Lustful scenes in Ang Lee film . .

From page H4

Illinois, he gave a rare glimpse of Ang, the private man: "My wife's taste is so opposite to the public's so I never listen to her (laughter). Sometimes I feel that she's a strange person like I would think that normal people would think this or that way [but she doesn't]. She is a very unique character. I am very attracted to her, not by her beauty, but as far as I could see, inner beauty. I basically model a lot of the strong, independent women characters on her. She's a very smart woman who takes a man like myself but doesn't get into the sentimental or artistic stuff. However, she has a soft spot that's quite vulnerable."

He continued, "In our daily life, I do the cooking and she does the rest. She takes care of the children because she has a stable job. She comes home every day while I am away a lot. When we talk, it's mostly about our mundane life—house chores—mostly that kind of thing (laughter). It's quite boring. The biggest help she gives me is that she is independent. And she can get excited when I get excited about something. When I am not busy and I really have time with her, I think she is bored with me (laughter). I wouldn't want to retire because I fear that she might kick me out of the house. We have two boys. She runs the house and sets the rules. She's the leader. We listen and obey. That's the kind of family we are."

* * *

Thomas Marcus George reacted to our recent item on the controversial entries in the foreign language category of the Academy Awards. We wrote, in part, "In India, Bhavna Talwar, the director of a film which lost out to 'Eklavya-The Royal Guard' as that country's entry, filed a lawsuit. The filmmaker accused the selection committee of conflict of interest since one of its members edited 'Eklavya.'"

Thomas, who is the marketing head of "Eklavya," claimed that this selection committee member did not work on the film itself but in the "making-of" video of "Eklavya."

Still the one

Thomas wrote, "She (Bhavna Talwar) accused him of bias owing to the fact that he was the editor of the 'making of' or 'behind the scenes,' a promotional unit of the film, which was made independent of the film and through outsourced talent." The latest news is that "Eklavya" will remain as India's entry.

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com and read his blog, "The Nepales Report," on www.inquirerbloggers.net/nepalesreport.

SNEAK PREVIEWS
OCTOBER
29 and 30

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD
• Ermita • Pioneer
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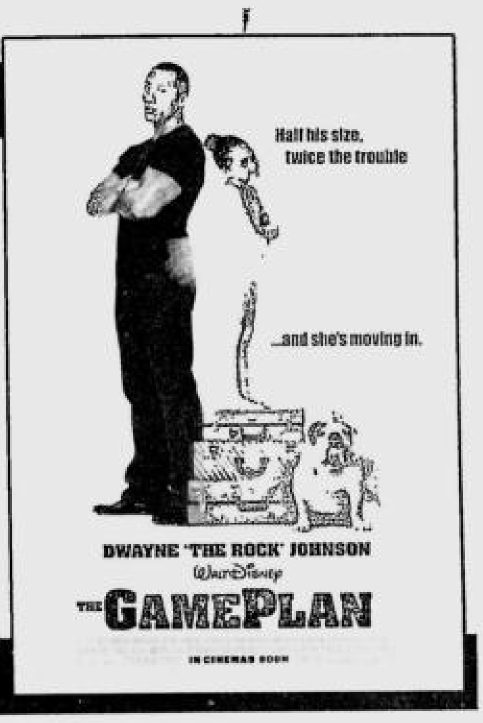
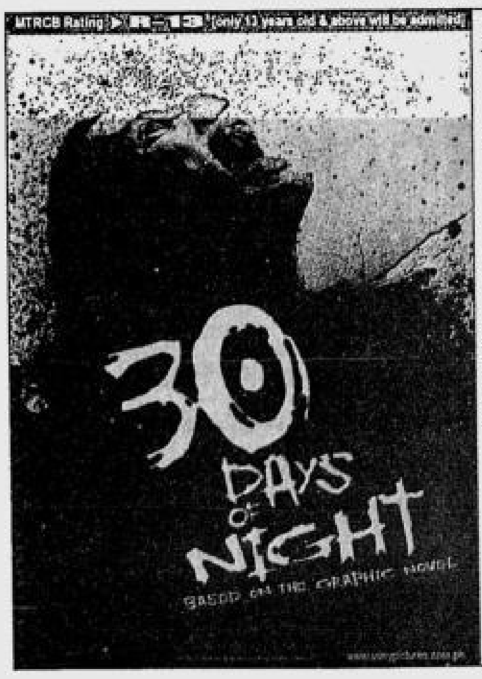
REGULAR Showing: November 7
MTRCB Rating: G (all ages admitted)
MOVIEWORLD



Half his size,
twice the trouble
...and she's moving in.
DWAYNE 'THE ROCK' JOHNSON
Walt Disney
THE GAMEPLAN
IN CINEMAS SOON



MTRCB Rating R-13 (only 13 years old & above will be admitted)
30 DAYS OF NIGHT
BASED ON THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

Fright Season Movie Event!

Vampires roam in 30 days of darkness in horror movie starring hot Josh Hartnett

For centuries, vampires have stayed in the dark, forced to hide each morning or else be destroyed by the sun's burning power.

Blood-thirsty, flesh-eating vampires viciously attack Barrow, Alaska, a remote town plunged into 30 days of darkness in winter, bringing its hapless residents to its knees. How do they survive till daylight finally comes?

Hot Hollywood actor and recent Philippines visitor Josh Hartnett stars as the embattled Sheriff Eben in 30 DAYS OF NIGHT, based on the groundbreaking graphic novel by Steve Niles and Ben Templesmith.

Bring a date or the barkada to a theatre near you!

OPENS OCTOBER 31!

MTRCB R-18 No one below 18 years of age may be admitted
THE ACADEMY AWARD-WINNING DIRECTOR OF CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON AND THE PRODUCER OF FEARLESS
TONY LEUNG
Introducing TANG WEI
LEEHOM WANG
TO KILL THE ENEMY, SHE MUST CAPTURE HIS HEART... AND BREAK HER OWN.
AN ANG LEE FILM
LUST 色戒 CAUTION
WINNER OF THE GOLDEN LION FOR BEST FILM AT THE 64th VENICE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Strictly For Adults

From Ang Lee, the award-winning director of "Brokeback Mountain" and "Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon"

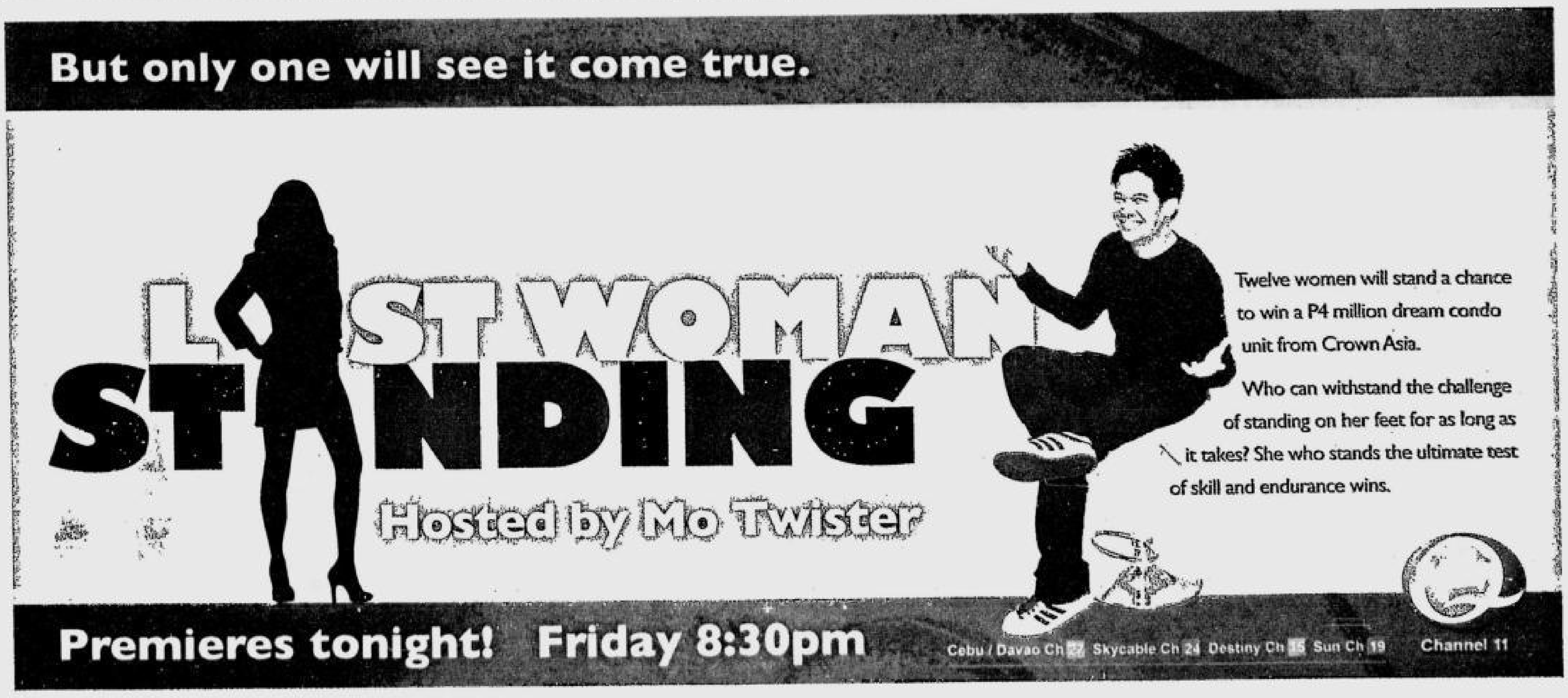
A startling, erotic espionage thriller to be shown in its original UNCUT version.

The film is about a young secret agent (Tang Wei) who was assigned to seduce a high-ranking intelligence official (Tony Leung) of the puppet government in WWII Shanghai. As she plunged deeper into the dangerous game of lust, betrayal and espionage, she slowly realized that her relationship with her prey had evolved into something she did not expect.

"A sumptuous, masterful piece of cinema... The torrid, full nudity scenes... set the screen ablaze."
Ruben Nepales, Philippine Daily Inquirer

"a tragic melodrama... This time love is a performance, a trap... an illusion."
Dennis Lim, New York Times

SPECIAL SCREENINGS TODAY
ONLY AT SELECTED THEATERS



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Twelve women will stand a chance to win a P4 million dream condo unit from Crown Asia.
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Lustful scenes in Ang Lee film to be shown in Manila screenings

ANG LEE directs Tang Wei in a scene in "Lust, Caution," which duplicated the Golden Lion Best Picture triumph in Venice of his "Brokeback Mountain" two years ago.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—IT IS ENCOURAGING TO hear that the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) has allowed Ang Lee's controversial, award-winning film, "Lust, Caution," to be shown without cuts in the Philippines.

The R-18 without cuts rating means the much-talked about sex scenes of Tony Leung and Tang Wei—graphic, yes, but integral to the film—will be seen intact by Philippine moviegoers. Hurrah for this evidence of enlightenment on the part of the censors. We've always been bothered by the double standard in the US, the Philippines and elsewhere—that it seems okay to show people killing each other but not making love.

Full nudity

Rather than cut the sexually explicit scenes, Ang and his producers accepted the film's NC-17 rating in the US. Usually, filmmakers slapped with an NC-17 tag make cuts to get a less restrictive rating. They see NC-17 as a death knell for a movie at the box-office since this rating severely limits the size of the audience allowed to watch.

As we've written previously, these sex scenes are acrobatic and daring. In a film that wonderfully, deliberately takes its time to tell a story of emotional and political intrigue in World War II Shanghai, the scenes appear toward the end of the film. Tony and Tang, playing characters both wary and attracted to each other; circling, testing, baiting each other, finally let go and have unembarrassed sex.

Even as they copulate, they are still sizing each other up. "Making love" is not the term—in fact, some cruelty is involved. The element of danger and betrayal hang heavy on these scenes since Tang, as a student masquerading as a rich young matron, has tempted Tony's powerful, vicious political figure (Mr. Yee) so he can be assassinated. Mr. Yee is still probing—no pun intended—Tang's Wong Chia Chi if she's who she says she is.

The full nudity scenes seem so real that not a few viewers wondered if actual "pene" (borrowing a term, short for penetration, that was in vogue in Manila in the '80s) took place. Our colleague did ask Tony and Tang, who came with interpreters, about it in their joint press.con with us in Toronto. The reporter asked, "I apologize ahead of time. I hope no one will be offended. If you feel uncomfortable, you don't have to answer. Did you have actual sex?"

Tony answered, "Of course not."

The actor, one of the finest in Asia (he won Best Actor in the 2000 Cannes Film Festival for his role in Wong Kar Wai's "In the Mood for Love"), said that, at first, Ang didn't make a big fuss about these torrid scenes. "I think he didn't want to scare me," Tony said with a smile. "I never set a line for myself as to how far I can go. Ang just always emphasized that we have those scenes but they are no big deal. He didn't mention them much."

But when it was almost time to do the scenes, Ang—known to be very meticulous and a perfectionist, got down to it. "We spent a lot of time discussing what we were going to do," Tony explained. "We also rehearsed through all the scenes before shooting so we have an idea what will they be. But after the rehearsals, we were still not very comfortable. We felt shy and uneasy. But I have been in this business for 25 years so I know that when the cameras roll, you stop feeling shy. You start reflecting on the emotions and inner accents of the character."

New peaks

Tang, who spoke some English but occasionally had to turn to her interpreter for assistance, said, "I was shy because I had to be very bare to face Tony. But everybody was so professional. There were just four of us on the set—Tony, Ang, the DP (director of photography Rodrigo Prieto) and me."

Of his celebrated director, who won the Oscar and Golden Globe Best Director award for "Brokeback Mountain," and who steered "Lust, Caution" to a Best Picture win in Venice, two years after he won the same top prize for "Brokeback," Tony said, "I saw a lot of Ang's movies. I was always curious why the actors in his movies are very good. That's one of the reasons that I took this role. Now, after working with him, I realize that he is very demanding, very tough. He will give you new peaks to reach every day. You are under a lot of pressure during the shooting but still, it was very [rewarding]."

> 'We've always been bothered by the double standard–that it's OK to show people killing each other but not making love'

Full credit

He added, "You can never change even a word in his script (which Ang co-wrote with James Schamus and Wang Hui Ling). That was good for me because Mandarin is not my mother tongue. I spent a lot of time memorizing all the lines because my brain functions only in Cantonese. He didn't allow me to change a word." After all, sometimes a look, not a word, from Tony or Tang was all that was needed. It's that kind of film where a look between characters is often enough to convey what's going on.

Ang, who spoke in his usual quiet manner during our press con with him, claimed complete credit for the various positions that Tony and Wang assumed. He disclosed, "I didn't have anyone to help me. I did the choreography. It was a very closed set. I stole a few things from the choreographer of 'Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon.' To me, the two films are similar. The choreography for one is for sex; the other is for life and death fighting. They're not merely fighting or having sex—they're dramatic tools. They're the ultimate expression of characteristics and development in a relationship—how you treat each other; how you occupy—being occupied, manipulation."

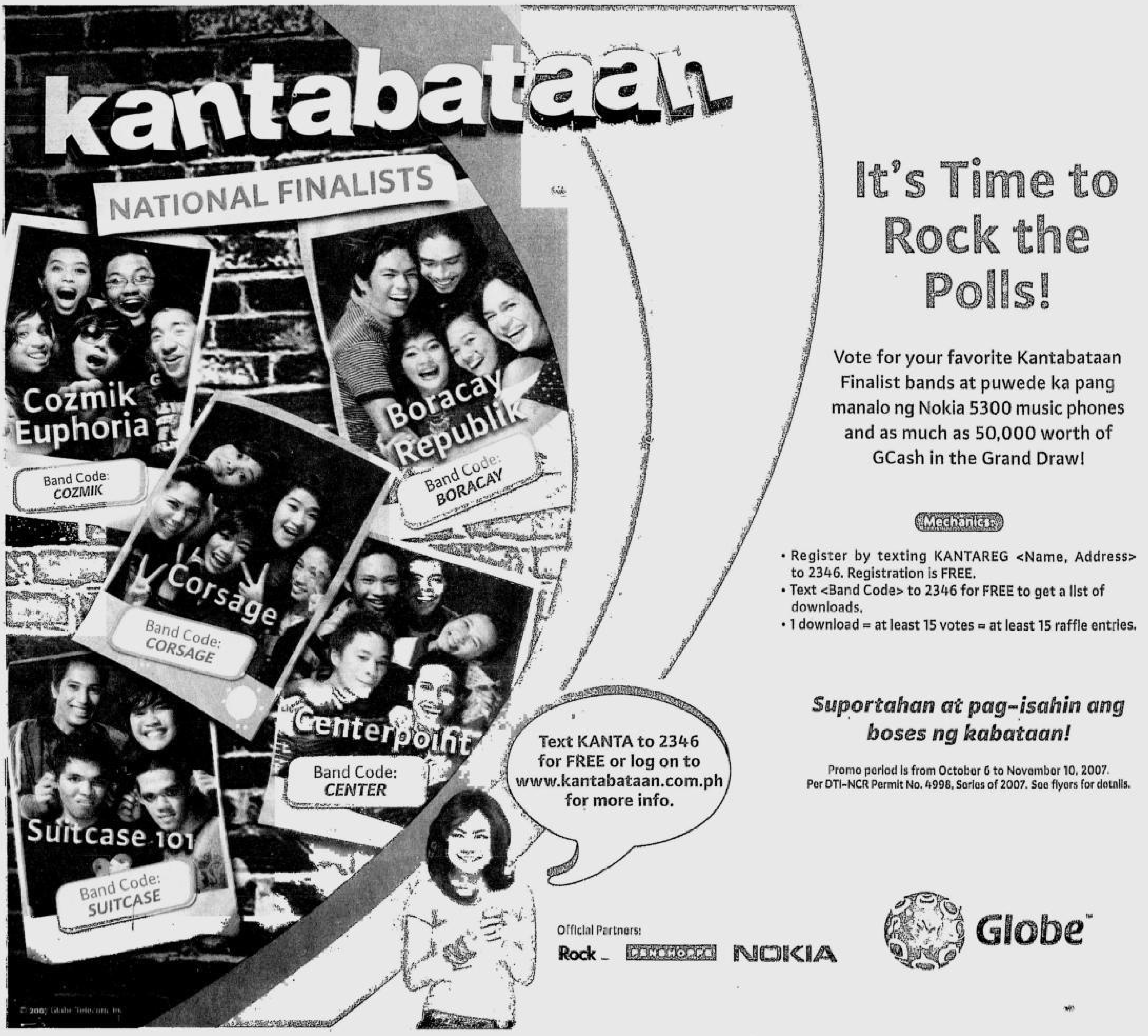
"I can tell you that most of the things I put in the movie I couldn't do in real life," the filmmaker quipped to laughter. "That's why I put them. I figured that theirs was a distorted relationship. I had to distort their bodies to give the body language. In each position, I have a specific idea in mind. When Tang assumes a fetal position, for example, it's because she needs a fatherly love."

Of the lust part in his movie's title, Ang said, "I think lust is a catalyst of love. I think romantic love is an interesting subject matter. I became aware of it and got interested in it only in this last couple of movies ('Brokeback' and 'Lust'). Maybe I'm a late bloomer. I became mature very late. I feel like I am just old enough, like somebody in his 20s, to yearn for and look up romantic love which I don't really exercise in life (laughing). I have to guess. These drama stories, they help me have a taste of it."

Private man

In his reply to a question about his wife, Jane Lin, a microbiologist whom he met while they were studying at the University of

LUSTFUL/H3



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LIVING Stars

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MTV documentary on human trafficking

STARS FOR OTHERS

THE YOUNG AND RESTLESS WHO love music, adventure and the prospect of landing a high-paying job abroad are the target audience of a new MTV documentary called "Traffic."

The docu is part of MTV Exit, a campaign to raise awareness and increase prevention of human trafficking.

"Traffic: An MTV Exit Special" airs on Oct. 24, 9:30 p.m.; Oct. 27, 1 p.m.; Oct. 29, 5:30 p.m.; and Nov. 2, 10 a.m. MTV is broadcast on Sky Cable's channel 57 and Destiny's channel 46.

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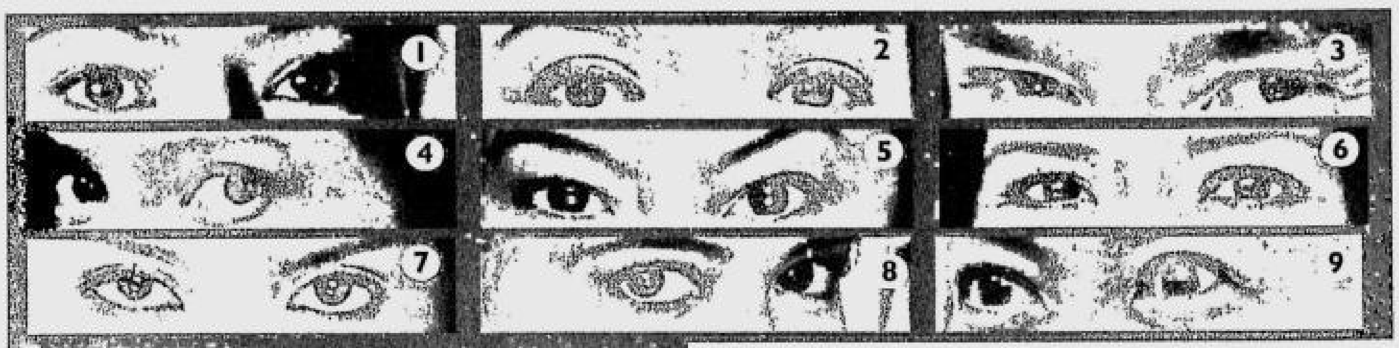

Seeing stars

Once-in-a-lifetime pre-holiday gifts of sight for INQUIRER readers

"LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE!" a cross-eyed Edu Manzano told the startled receptionist at the American Eye Center in Shangri-la Plaza Edsa.

But, Jacqui Javier figured, he must be kidding. Didn't he crack jokes all the way to the operating table yesterday?

Edu *was* jesting. He had come for the routine next-day check-up after undergoing Lasik surgery—as had billiard champ Efren "Bata" Reyes before him, pro golfer Frankie Miñoza, legislator (also one-time actor and pro cager) Freddie Webb, and a long list of show biz denizens like himself.

"For entertainment people, the requirements are apparent," says Dr. Jack Arroyo, refractive surgeon and AEC president. Meaning, most of the patients from this field would rather do away with eyeglasses or contact lenses. Can't squint while reading the TelePrompTer or cue cards—and spectacles should be a matter of choice, or an accessory.

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SEEING/12

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October 27 , 2007 Jonathan Badon 8:00 PM
November 9&10, 16&17, 23&24 " Into the Woods " musical 8:00 PM
November 15 , 2007 Retrospect 8:00 PM
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Oct. 31 / Nov.7,14,15 21,22, 28 &29 Cerrudo Classico 8:00 PM
October 26, 2007 John Lesaca 8:00 PM
October 27, 2007 Angelos 8:00 PM
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FAVORITE NOOKS

KIAN KAZEMI

I'M RARELY home, but when I am, I stay in my bedroom. It's also the favorite room of my sister and two brothers. I had the walls painted in pastel colors, *para* happy *ang* mood. I first thought of using rainbow colors, but I'm still saving up for it. From my bedroom window, I have a perfect view of the sun rising from behind Makati's skyscrapers. Right beside my bed is my favorite Marilyn Monroe sculpture.

Marinel R. Cruz
PHOTO BY ROMY HOMILLADA

Seeing stars

From page I1

of myopia and astigmatism by altering the shape of the cornea using a special laser instrument.

The surgery proper takes all of five minutes, but the pre-screenings and tests could take a whole morning and bring out facets of a celebrity patient's personality that the public doesn't usually see.

Arroyo recalls how Edu chatted up patients at the waiting room, "making them feel comfortable."

Dr. Ralph Rafa, chief optometrist, thinks the actor-TV host—and, not to forget, chair of the Optical Media Board—must have been "a little nervous." Just like comedian Ai-Ai De las Alas, Rafa adds. "She also cracked up the staff, though she seemed in a hurry, like she had to be somewhere else."

The AEC staff remembers a "formal" Zsazsa Padilla. Rafa says, "We didn't hear her voice until she got a call on her phone and, later, she said, 'That was my husband (Dolphy), asking if it's finished.'"

Also extremely quiet was Vicky Morales. Dr. Joanne Bolinao says the GMA 7 news anchor is their "calmest celebrity patient" so far.

Rafa agrees. "From the minute she entered the center till she left, and even on her subsequent checkups, she had the same demeanor—very relaxed."

Bata Reyes could have been the most petrified. No one at the center remembers hearing him speak until the next day, when he admitted he had been "very scared."

Arroyo says Pops Fernandez and scriptwriter Ricky Lee were among the first show biz people to get Lasik, about 10 years ago.

The AEC list has since grown longer to include (aside from those previously mentioned) to date: Viva Hot Babe Andrea del Rosario, Marc Nelson, Aliya Parcs, Pia Pilapil, Alice Dixson, Hajji Alejandro, Apo Danny Javier, Lyn Ching, Daphne Oseña-Paez, Bibeth Orteza, Armida Siguion-Reyna, Jan Nieto and Gina Valenciano.

***

For Living Stars readers, the American Eye Center, celebrating its 12th anniversary this year, is giving away three (3) bilateral (both eyes) Lasik surgery certificates (transferable) worth P70,000 each.

Just name the nine (9) stars whose eyes appear with this story. Send your answers via e-mail (info@eyecenter.com.ph) or text 0917-LASER ME (0917-5273763). The 1st, 20th and 40th email sender or texter who provide the correct answers will be declared winners.

Entries will be guided by time stamps (time the e-mail and/or SMS was received). Winners will be notified via the medium they picked to send their entries. Results will be announced Nov. 23 in Living Stars. The contest is not open to employees and/or relatives of the PDI and American Eye Center.

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METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 CINE EUROPA
2 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
3 RENDITION
4 STURDUST
PREMIERE
THE SEEKER : DARK IS RISING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4236
1 THE SEEKER : DARK IS RISING
2 RENDITION
3 UNREST
4 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

starmall
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7269160
3 HIGHLANDER -V
4 RENDITION
5

metropolis star cinema
(ALABANG) tel. 8504288, 8433994
1 MR. WOODCOCK
2 HIGHLANDER -V
3 THE SEEKER : DARK IS RISING
4 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

THEATRES
1 KUNG FU FIGHTER
2 DECEMBER BOYS
3 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel. (042) 660-6271
1 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
2 RISE
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMAS
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 RENDITION
2 RESIDENT EVIL
3 UNREST
4 STURDUST
5 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
6 THE SEEKER : DARK IS RISING
7 NO RESERVATION
8 KNOCKED UP
9 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
10 KUNG FU FIGHTER

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341827
1 THE SEEKER : DARK IS RISING
2 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
3 RENDITION
4 RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 UNREST
5 RENDITION

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 CHUCK & LARRY
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
2 RENDITION
3 THE SEEKER : DARK IS RISING

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)-(4445346)
1 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
2 THE SEEKER : DARK IS RISING

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
2 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
3 STURDUST
4 RETRIBUTION

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 I KNOW WHO KILL ME
2 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 RENDITION
2 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
3 STURDUST
4 KNOCKED UP / THE SEEKER

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
2 KUNG FU FIGHTER
3 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 DON'T LOOK BACK
2 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
3 KUNG FU FIGHTER

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
2 HAIRSPRAY
3 KUNG FU FIGHTER
4 KNOCKED UP

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 NO RESERVATION / DECEMBER BOYS
2 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
3 KNOCKED UP

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 SKINWALKERS
2 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 DAY WATCH
2 KUNG FU FIGHTER

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 WEDDING DAZE
2 MASARAP UNANG KAGAT
3 BATANG MAGDALENA
4 I KNOW WHO KILL ME

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
2 MASARAP UNANG KAGAT
3 KUNG FU FIGHTER
4 THREE
5 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM
2 KNOCKED UP
3 DECEMBER BOYS
4 RESIDENT EVIL

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 SIYA AY NAHDADALAGA
2 BEDROOM SECRET

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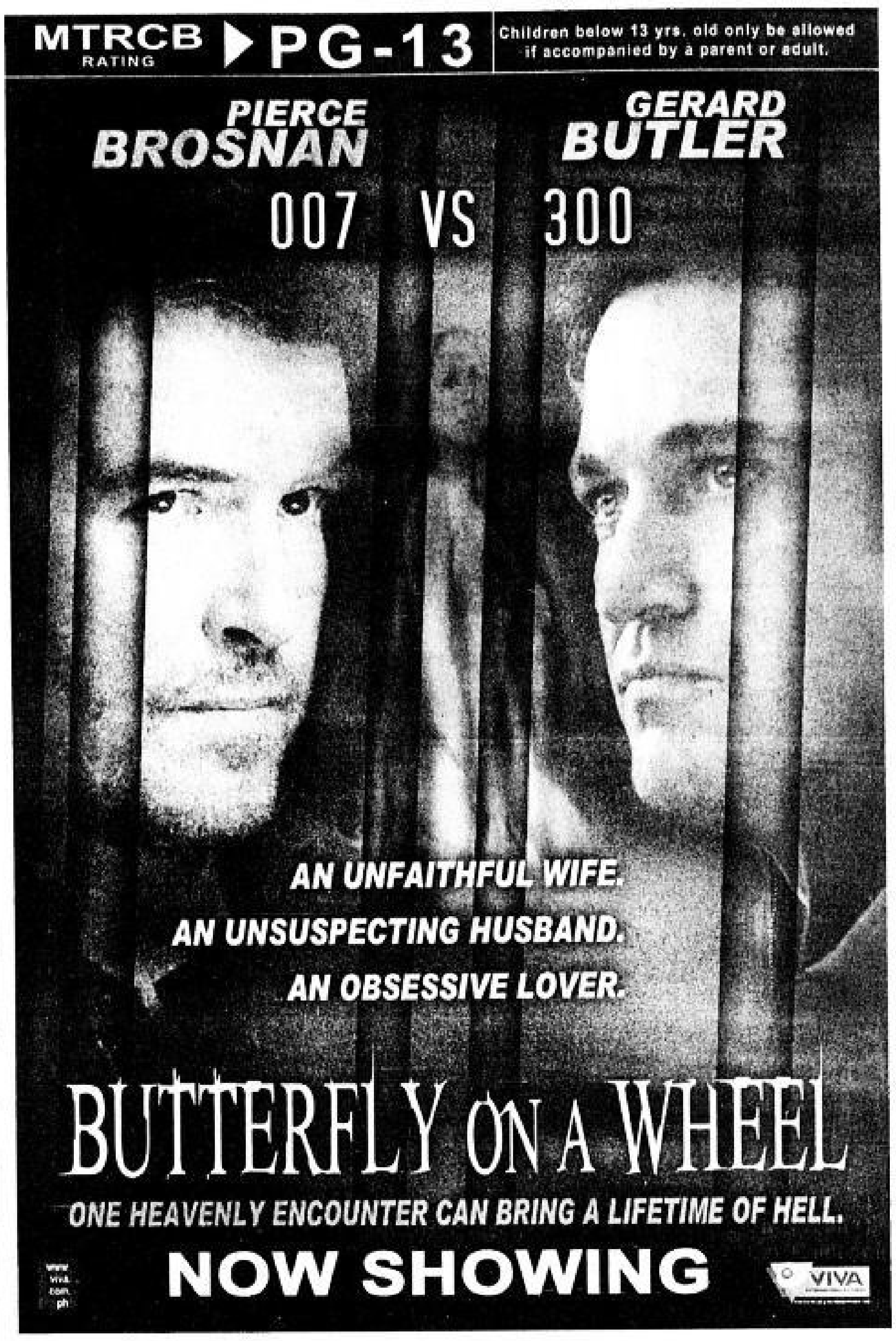

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AN UNSUSPECTING HUSBAND.
AN OBSESSIVE LOVER.
BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
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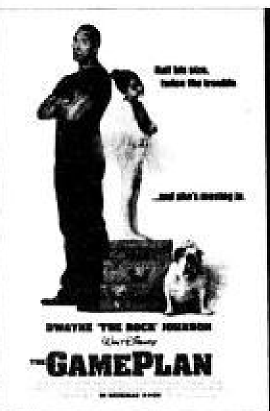

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UNREST 12:30 / 2:45 / 5:00 / 7:15 / 9:30
THE SEEKER: DARK IS RISING 12:15 / 2:35 / 4:55 / 7:15 / 9:50
BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30
RENDITION 12:30 / 3:30 / 6:30 / 9:30
KNOCKED UP 6:30 / 9:20
APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40
MR WOODCOCK 1:50 / 4:10
RESIDENT EVIL : EXTINCTION 12:50 / 3:10 / 5:30 / 7:50 / 9:50
STARDUST 12:35 / 3:30 / 6:25 / 9:20
BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
Globe PLATINUM CINEMA

Ali MALL CINEMAS
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS
THE SEEKER: DARK IS RISING 12:10 RS / 1:00 / 3:30 / 5:50 / 8:10
UNREST 1:40 / 3:55 / 6:10 / 8:25

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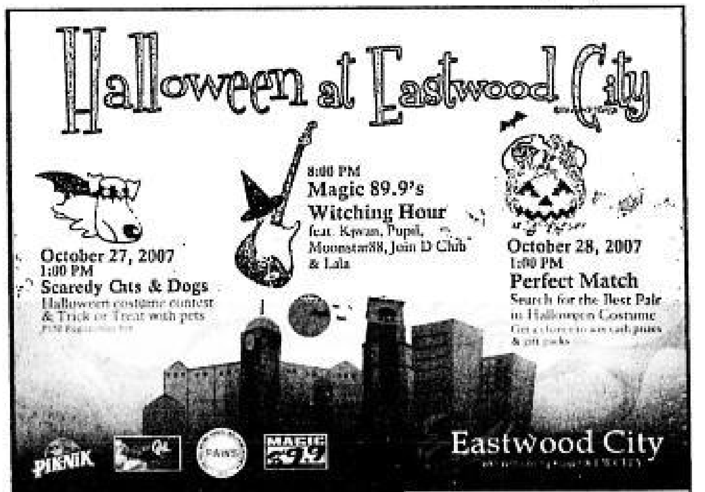

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October 27, 2007
1:00 PM
Scaredy Cats & Dogs
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8:00 PM
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feat. Kjwan, Pupil, Moonstar88, Join D Club & Lala
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1 THE SEEKER 3:35, 6:05 GP / KNOCKED UP 8:25, 11:10 R-18
2 RENDITION 1:40, 4:35, 7:30, 10:35 R-13
3 STARDUST 2:15, 5:05, 7:55, 10:40 G
4 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 PG-13

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We have seen the APOCALYPSE...
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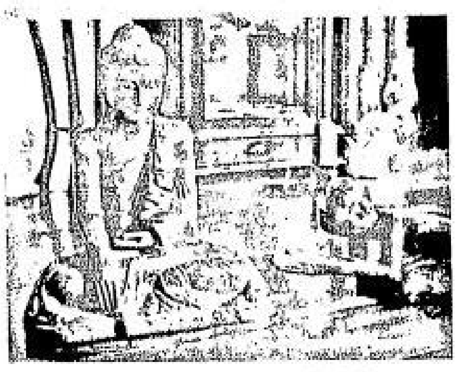
RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION

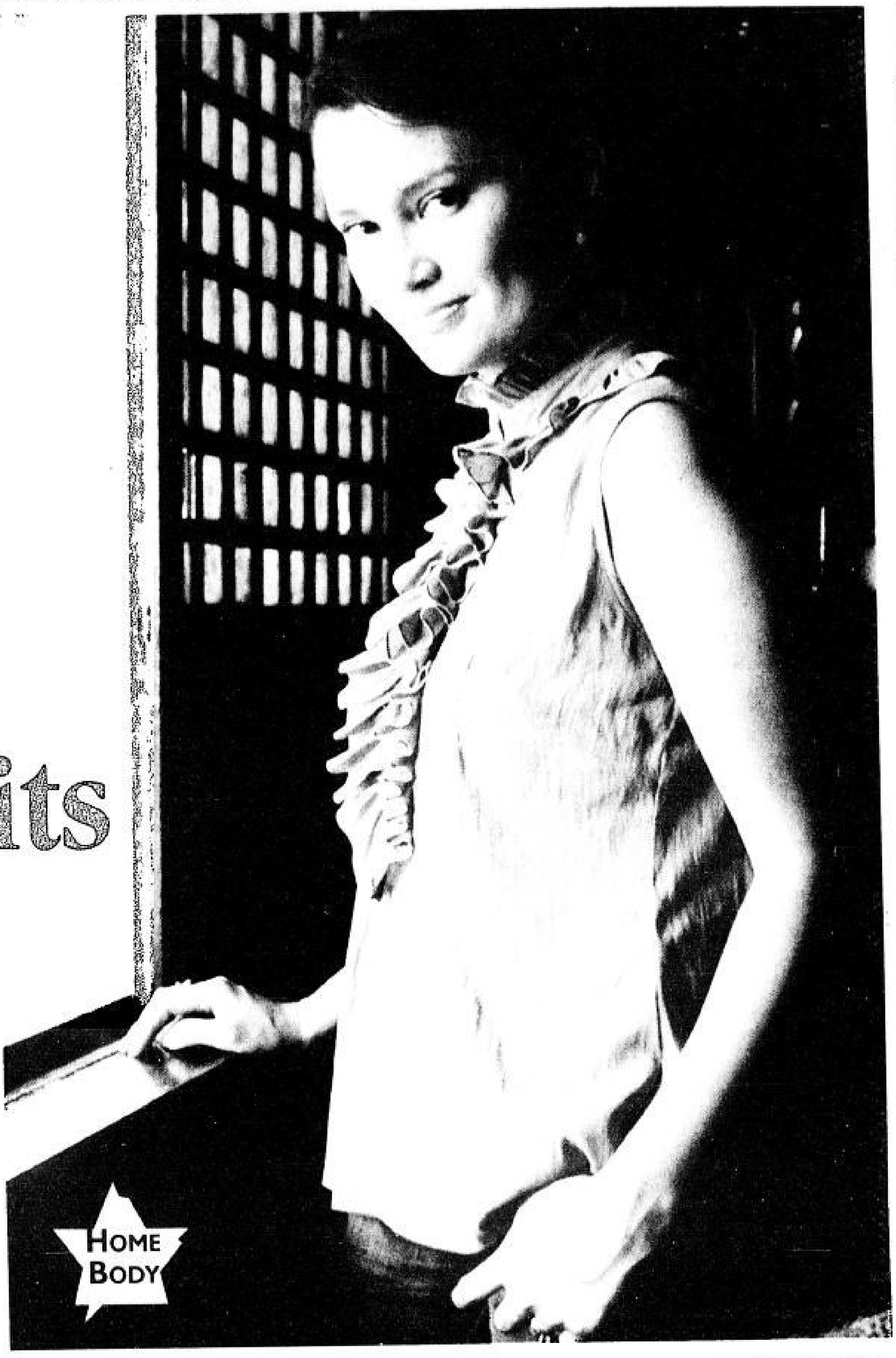
RELIGIOUS icons from another era


BUDDHA comes with its own disciple.

ITO Kish clustered vinegar and tuba (rice wine) jars and boat-fishing floaters.

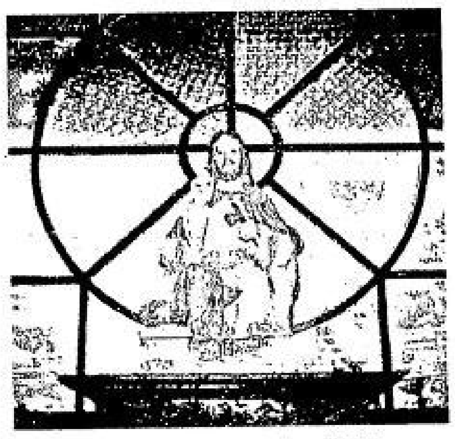
Daphne Oseña-Paez fondly describes her 'bahay na bato' as a showcase of antiques

House of spirits



By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Rodel Rotoni

CHINESE jars were once used to keep face powder and cosmetics.


PATRICK's father Gregorio installed the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the doorway.

TV HOST DAPHNE OSEÑA-Paez used to live in an ultramodern pad. She never imagined she'd move to an authentic *bahay na bato* filled with antiques.

But Daphne, host of QTV's "Proudly Filipina," has been calling this "museum" home since she tied the knot with ABC 5 broadcast journalist Patrick Paez five years ago.

Patrick grew up in this suburban house, she explains. "When we moved in, the place looked sad and dark. I wanted a bit of color."

With dispatch, she painted the main door a fiery shade of red. Shocked, her brother-in-law, Dennis Paez, a Salesian priest, said, "It's like a brothel."

Daphne recounts, "I explained to him that the red door announced there were young people living here now."

Feminine touch

The antique pieces are from the extensive collection of Patrick's mom, Imelda, who passed away a decade ago, Daphne says. "This house didn't have a woman for a long time; I wanted to add a bit of femininity."

First item on Daphne's to-do list was to trim down the number of antiques. "We did a lot of editing and stored excess pieces in two *bodegas*. Otherwise, we wouldn't be able to move around because of all the furniture."

Antique gas lamps, Venetian mirrors, wooden armoires, *gallineras* and chairs, metal ceiling fans, as well as giant religious figures are strewn all over the living room.

"It's like a house of spirits," Daphne jests. "Except there are no ghosts here."

For a hint of the 21st century, Daphne displayed modern art works and family photos.

"The paintings are from the Daphne series by my friend Popo San Pascual," she says.

She hung a "blue" painting by Bernardo Pacquing. "It was Patrick's and my gift for each other on our first anniversary."

Arranged neatly on a pink wall are photographs from their travels, from Batulao to Paris, Boracay to New York.

"These photos have only our firstborn Sophia," she says. "I'll put up another wall of photographs with [second daughter] Lily Paloma."

Another early project was to turn the *zaguan* (ground floor space) into a modern lounging area.

"It looked like a dungeon," she says.

But Ito Kish, interior designer and Daphne's former co-host on "Urban Zone," turned it into an inviting space—with its own dining area, TV room and lanai — combining modern with antique pieces

"Patrick bought the green divan [in the TV room] for only P200," she recalls. "He got it from a recycling depot. Of course, it was ugly and ratty when it first got here. We had it reupholstered."

Patrick has a knack for restoring old stuff, says Daphne. "He turned a music stand into a lamp; a sewing machine into a marble-topped table."

When they got married, Daphne recounts, "we decided to make this house our pet project." As such, it's still a work in progress.

Patrick relates that his late dad Gregorio, an architect, utilized wood from trees in their Nueva Ecija farm and recruited farmers to build the house, in the traditional way, in 1969.

"The floors of the main house are made of narra wood and the ceiling, acacia," Daphne notes. "It also has capiz windows and *ventanillas* (sliding windows between the floor and window for ventilation)."

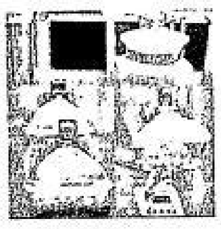
In the *zaguan*, the ceiling is covered with *sawali*, kept in place with *tansan* (bottle caps).

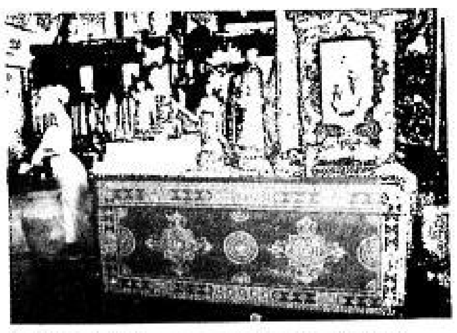
"When we had the house checked recently, an engineer confirmed that it was constructed using traditional methods. Even the walls are sectional," says Patrick.

When Sophia's class needed to go to a museum, Daphne suggested their home. "I toured them around and told them the story behind each piece," she says. "In a way, Sophia and her classmates also learned a bit of history."

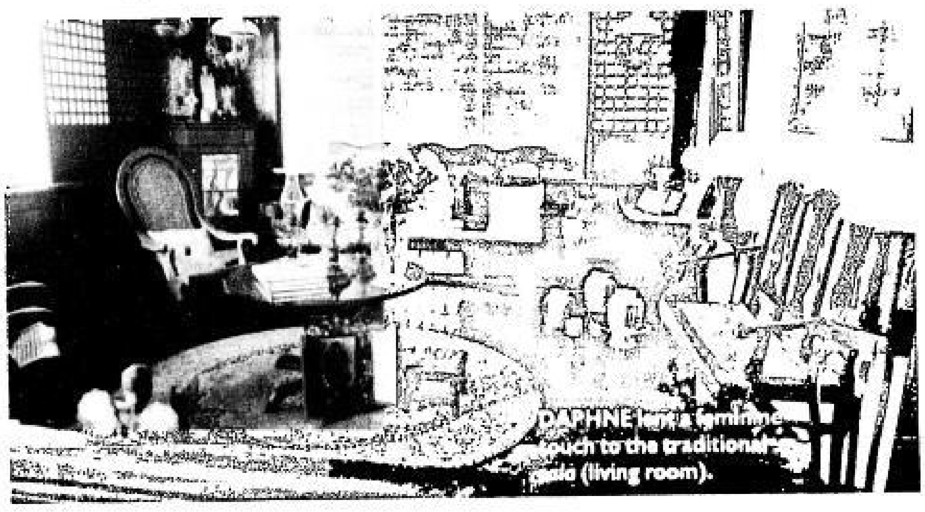
FOO dog stands guard in the living area.

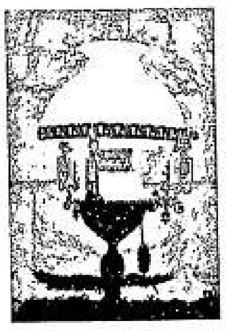
PATRICK turned this music stand into a lamp.


CARNIVAL glasses on the dining table

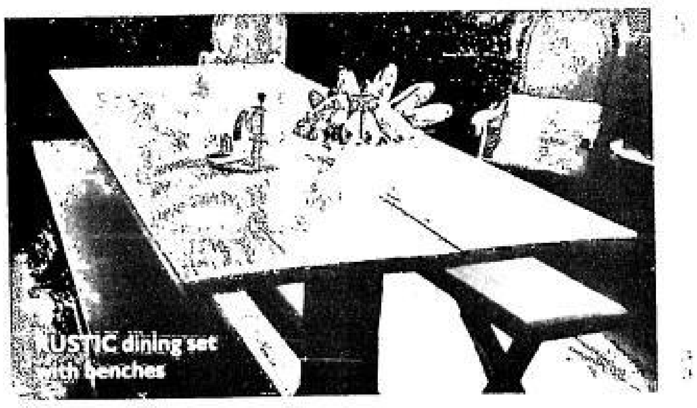

RELIGIOUS figures rest on ancient chest.

DISPLAY case for goblets crystals and wine glasses


DAPHNE lends a feminine touch to the traditional sala (living room).


GAS lamp

DAPHNE with husband Patrick Paez


RUSTIC dining set with benches

LUNCH time with Lily and Sophia

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7 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
8 MR. WOODCOCK
9 HIGHLANDER V
10 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
11 RENDITION
12 KUNG FU FIGHTER

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1 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
2 11TH HOUR
3 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
4 RESIDENT EVIL 3
5 MR. WOODCOCK
6 RENDITION
7 KUNG FU FIGHTER
8 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
9 STARDUST
10 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
11 UNREST
12 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 RENDITION
2 MR. WOODCOCK
3 HIGHLANDER V
4 RESIDENT EVIL 3
5 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
6 STARDUST
7 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
8 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
9 KUNG FU FIGHTER
10 ROGUE ASSASSIN
11 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
12 WEDDING DAZE

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
2 HIGHLANDER V
3 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
4 RESIDENT EVIL 3
5 RENDITION
6 KUNG FU FIGHTER
7 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
8 STARDUST
9 ROGUE ASSASSIN
10 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
3 UNREST
4 RENDITION
5 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
6 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 RENDITION
2 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
3 UNREST
4 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
5 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
6 RESIDENT EVIL 3
7 STARDUST
8 HIGHLANDER V
9 RETRIBUTION

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
2 HIGHLANDER V
3 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
4 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
3 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
4 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
5 RENDITION
6 RESERVED
7 STARDUST
8 KUNG FU FIGHTER
9 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
10 HIGHLANDER V
11 RETRIBUTION
12 UNREST

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
2 RISE
3 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
4 NO RESERVATIONS

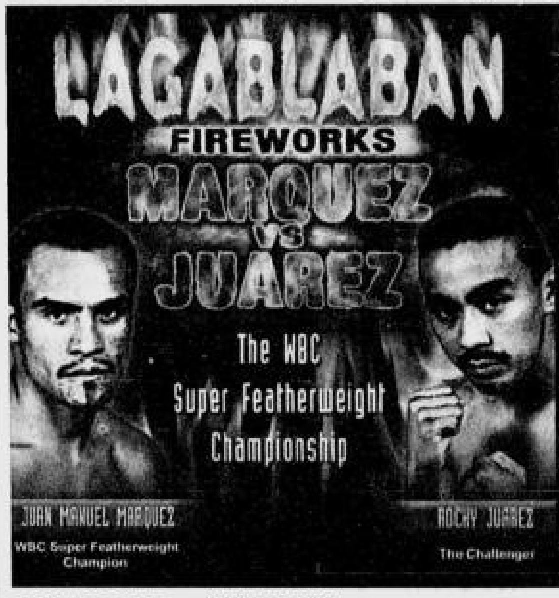
SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

1 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
2 HIGHLANDER V
3 MR. WOODCOCK
4 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 HIGHLANDER V
2 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
3 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
4 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

SPORTSTiME



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1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 STARDUST
3 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
4 RETRIBUTION
5 RESIDENT EVIL 3
6 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
7 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
8 RENDITION

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
3 STARDUST
4 RETRIBUTION
5 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
6 EVENING

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 SHOOT EM' UP
2 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
3 NO RESERVATIONS
4 RESIDENT EVIL 3

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 DECEMBER BOYS
3 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
4 THE HOST

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637691-95

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
3 RETRIBUTION
4 WEDDING DAZE
5 EVENING
6 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

SM CITY LIPA (043) 784-0187

1 DECEMBER BOYS
2 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
3 RESIDENT EVIL 3
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 SHOOT EM' UP
2 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
3 RISE
4 DECEMBER BOYS/ I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
3 STARDUST
4 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
2 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
3 HIGHLANDER V
4 MR. WOODCOCK

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811

1 NO RESERVATIONS
2 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
3 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
4 RESIDENT EVIL 3

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

1 SHOOT EM' UP
2 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
3 NO RESERVATIONS
4 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
5 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING
6 STARDUST

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884

1 STARDUST
2 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
3 RETRIBUTION
4 EVENING

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 NO RESERVATIONS
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 RETRIBUTION
4 RESIDENT EVIL 3
5 DECEMBER BOYS
6 RESERVED
7 RESERVED
8 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 STARDUST
2 DECEMBER BOYS
3 SHOOT EM' UP
4 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
5 RETRIBUTION
6 EVENING
7 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
8 THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 STRARDUST
3 WEDDING DAZE
4 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

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GALLERIA

Ticket Price THX:P160 130 Indie Sine:130 632-9118

1 STARDUST • THX
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00
2 BUTTERFLY on a WHEEL
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
3 MANILA PRIDE FEST
1:00 2:30 4:00 5:30 7:00
4 UNREST
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
5 RENDITION
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
6 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
7 MR. WOODCOCK / HIGHLANDER
1:40 3:40 / 5:30 7:45 10:00
8 KNOCKED UP
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00
9 RESIDENT EVIL 3
1:05 3:20 5:35 7:50 10:00
10 THE SEEKER: Dark is Rising
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

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A lingering love? Or is it lust? Memories of betrayal? Or one last love? And is it really gone?

ERMITA

Ticket Price: P110 / P120

1 BUTTERFLY on a WHEEL
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
2 KNOCKED UP / STARDUST
12:00 2:30 / 5:00 7:30 10:00
3 RENDITION
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00
4 UNREST
11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
5 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
6 RESIDENT EVIL 3
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
7 THE SEEKER: Dark is Rising
11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

METRO EAST

Ticket Price: P100 / P110 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 KNOCKED UP
1:00 3:35 6:15 9:00
2 THE SEEKER: Dark is Rising
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10
3 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05
4 UNREST
12:15 2:30 4:45 7:00 9:10
5 BUTTERFLY on a WHEEL
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
6 HIGHLANDER / MR. WOODCOCK
11:25 1:50 / 3:40 5:30 7:20 9:10
7 RESIDENT EVIL 3
11:40 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00
8 RENDITION
1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00

NOVALICHES

Ticket Price P90 / P100 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 THE SEEKER: Dark is Rising
2 KNOCKED UP
3 BUTTERFLY on a WHEEL
4 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

PIONEER

Ticket Price: P100 / P110 687-5378

1 RENDITION
12:50 3:20 5:50 8:20
2 BUTTERFLY on a WHEEL
1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
3 THE SEEKER: Dark is Rising
1:40 4:00 5:20 8:40
4 UNREST
12:25 3:10 5:55 8:40

STA. ROSA

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (049) 837-0907

1 THE SEEKER: Dark is Rising
2 NO RESERVATIONS
3 SHOOT 'EM UP
4 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
5 RESERVED

LIPA

Ticket Price: P90 (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 RESIDENT EVUL 3
2 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
3 DECEMBER BOYS
4 KNOCKED UP

DASMARIÑAS

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (046) 416-4332

1 SHOOT 'EM UP
2 NO RESERVATIONS
3 THE SEEKER: Dark is Rising
4 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT

IMUS

Ticket Price: P100 (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 BUTTERFLY on a WHEEL
2 THE SEEKER: Dark is Rising
3 APAT APAT DAPAT APAT
4 HIGHLANDER

ANGELES

Ticket Price: P90 / P95 (045) 892-2348

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
3 RETRIBUTION
4 STARDUST

TARLAC

1 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
2 THREE
3 KNOCKED UP

STARMILLS

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (045) 875-1927

1 WEDDING DAZE
2 STARDUST
3 APAT DAPAT, DAPAT APAT
4 THE SEEKER: Dark is Rising
5 RETRIBUTION
6 RESIDENT EVIL 3

BACOLOD

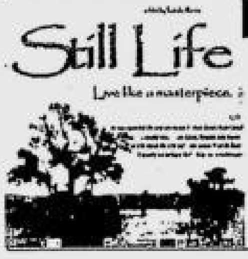
Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 WEDDING DAZE
3 IndieSine: STILL LIFE
4 STARDUST
5 KNOCKED UP
6 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT

ILOILO

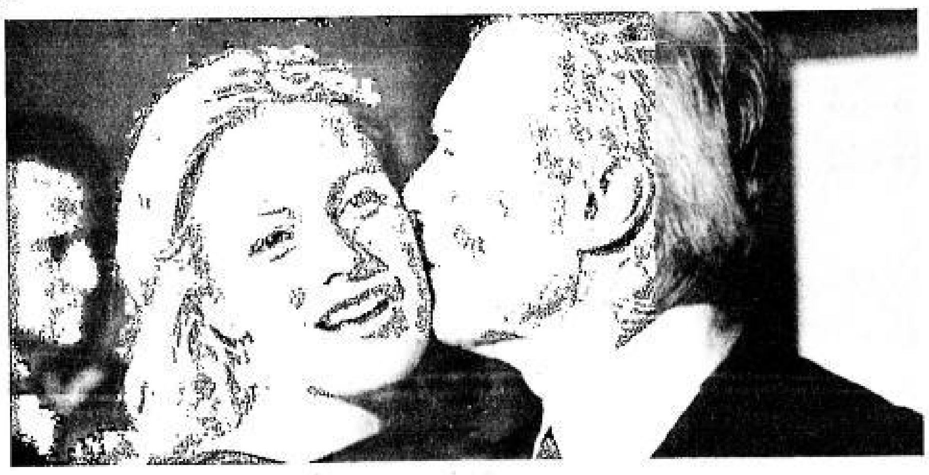
Ticket Price: P70 / P80 (033) 336-8070

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 RETRIBUTION
3 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
4 KNOCKED UP
5 DECEMBER BOYS
6 NO RESERVATIONS



a film by Katski Flores

watch this only at Robinsons Movieworld Bacolod OCTOBER 24 to 30



RED CARPET

DIRECTOR Alison Eastwood receives a kiss from her father, actor/director/producer Clint Eastwood, at the premiere of "Rails and Ties" in Warner Bros Studios, Burbank. REUTERS

JAMIE RIVERA

SOPHIE Kinsella's "Confessions of a Shopaholic" series and "Can You Keep a Secret?" are my favorites. My daughter picked up the book at the mall because she thought it was for kids, due to its colorful cover. Since I'm vigilant about her reading fare, I browsed through it first and discovered that it was something I'd enjoy as well. It's because it's set in England, has British characters and reminds me of the shopping places I used to frequent when I was doing "Miss Saigon" in London. [Main character] Becky's adventures are funny and entertaining. She had to learn the hard way not to spend more than she earns. But she also taught me that a mistake could have a positive effect if you have noble intentions and consider the feelings of others.

Bayani San Diego Jr.

Can you keep a Secret?
Shopaholic

RAFAEL ROSEL

I LIKE Yann Martel's "The Life of Pi." It says that if you chose to be happy, you will be happy. It also says that being happy is a choice you make.

Mitch Albom's "For One More Day" made me cry. This is the story of a man who's ready to give everything up and wants to kill himself. On the day he set out to jump off a tower, he goes home and finds his deceased mom waiting for him. He spends time with her, treating her in a way he never did when she was alive, only to learn that she going to stay with him for just a day. The question that rises in the reader's mind is, if you're given one day with someone you truly love, how would you spend it? I started appreciating my family and friends more. I tell them stuff that I wouldn't usually tell them. This book is so beautifully written.

Marinel R. Cruz
PHOTO BY RYAN RAMOS/ABS-CBN

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From the writers and director of international phenomenon SAW comes an experience on the razor's edge of fear. A widower returns to his hometown to search for answers to his wife's murder, which may be linked to the ghost of the murdered ventriloquist.
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The worms are back but this time in a prequel, set in 1889 Nevada as silver mines inspector Hiram Gummer, the great-grandfather of Burt Gummer, arrives in the small settlement of Rejection Valley and faces-off against the so called graboid worm monsters devouring the local inhabitants.
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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GLORIETTA 1	BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	RENDITION	THE UNREST	APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT			
GLORIETTA 4	STARDUST	THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING	THX BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL GUARANTEED SEATS	MR. WOODCOCK	PERFUME: THE STORY OF A MURDERER	RENDITION	KNOCKED UP
GREENBELT 1	BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	RENDITION					
GREENBELT 3	THX BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL GUARANTEED SEATS	THX RENDITION GUARANTEED SEATS	KNOCKED UP GUARANTEED SEATS	THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING GUARANTEED SEATS	STARDUST GUARANTEED SEATS		
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX RENDITION	BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	STARDUST	THE 11TH HOUR	THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING		
AYALA CENTER CEBU	DECEMBER BOYS	SHOOT 'EM UP	EVENING	THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING			
MARKET! MARKET!	RENDITION	APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT	THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING	BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	THE UNREST		
TRINOMA • THX Certified • All-Digital Sound • All-Stadium Seating • Computerized Ticketing System • Recliner Seats	APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT	BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	THE UNREST GUARANTEED SEATS	THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING GUARANTEED SEATS	STARDUST	KNOCKED UP	THX RENDITION GUARANTEED SEATS

AT THE MALLS

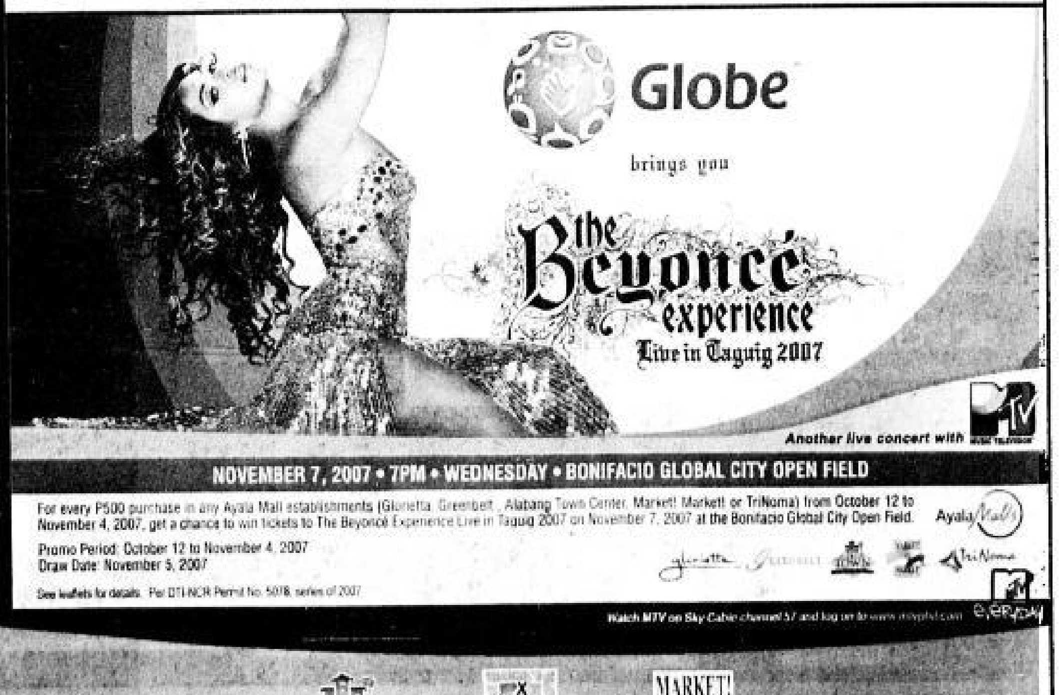
CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:

Glorietta - 752 7272	Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1660	Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519	TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala Malls

glorietta	Halloween Treat: Jack-O-Lantern Photo Display October 25 to 31; Glorietta 3 Park
GREENBELT	Trick or Treat at Greenbelt 3 Park October 25 to 28 and 31
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Automatic Center October 15 to 26; Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Kiddo Halloween Event October 27; Activity Center and On Stage (Cinema 1)
MARKET! MARKET!	Dancing Stage Supernova Challenge 2007 Grand Finals October 26; Activity Center
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids August - December 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710 or visit www.repertory-philippines.com
Ayala MUSEUM	HYBRIDITY: Mark Lewis Higgins September 18 to October 28, 2007; Ground Floor For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Sesame Street Party October 28; Activity Center

Ayala Malls Cinemas
Flick Parade
Kids who come as their favorite movie character or in their spookiest Halloween costumes on October 27, 2007 (Saturday) at Glorietta 4 Cinemas from 1p.m. to 4p.m get to enjoy face painting or balloon twisting and bring home Halloween goodies from Ayala Malls Cinemas.
Come in your favorite movie character or spookiest Halloween costume and enjoy special treats.
DQ Dairy Queen
Choco-Pie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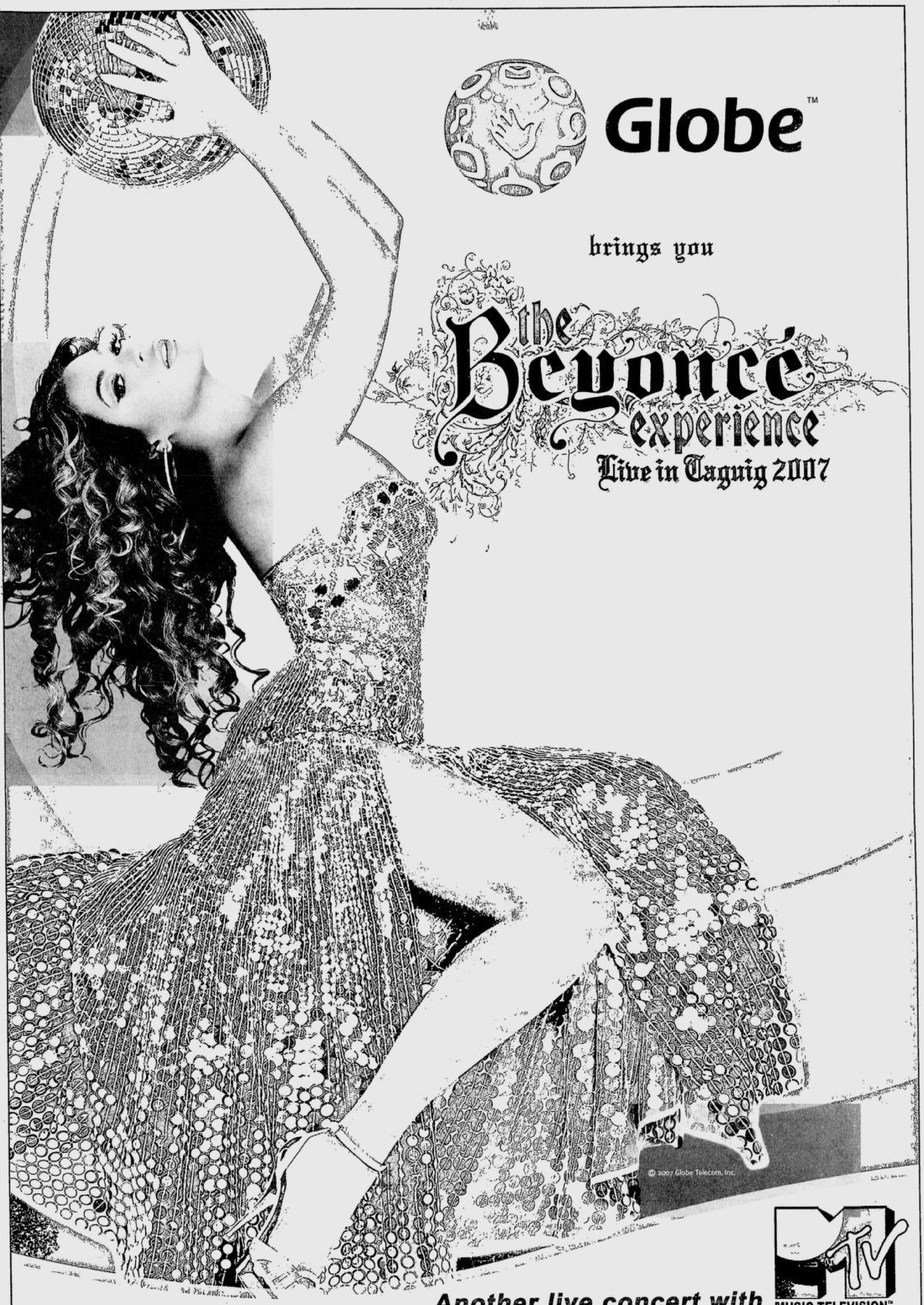
Live in Taguig 2007
Another live concert with MTV
NOVEMBER 7, 2007 • 7PM • WEDNESDAY • BONIFACIO GLOBAL CITY OPEN FIELD
For every P500 purchase in any Ayala Mall establishments (Glorietta, Greenbelt, Alabang Town Center, Market! Market! or TriNoma) from October 12 to November 4, 2007, get a chance to win tickets to The Beyoncé Experience Live in Taguig 2007 on November 7, 2007 at the Bonifacio Global City Open Field.
Promo Period: October 12 to November 4, 2007
Draw Date: November 5, 2007
See leaflets for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5078, series of 2007
Ayala Malls
Watch MTV on Sky Cable channel 57
everyday
glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma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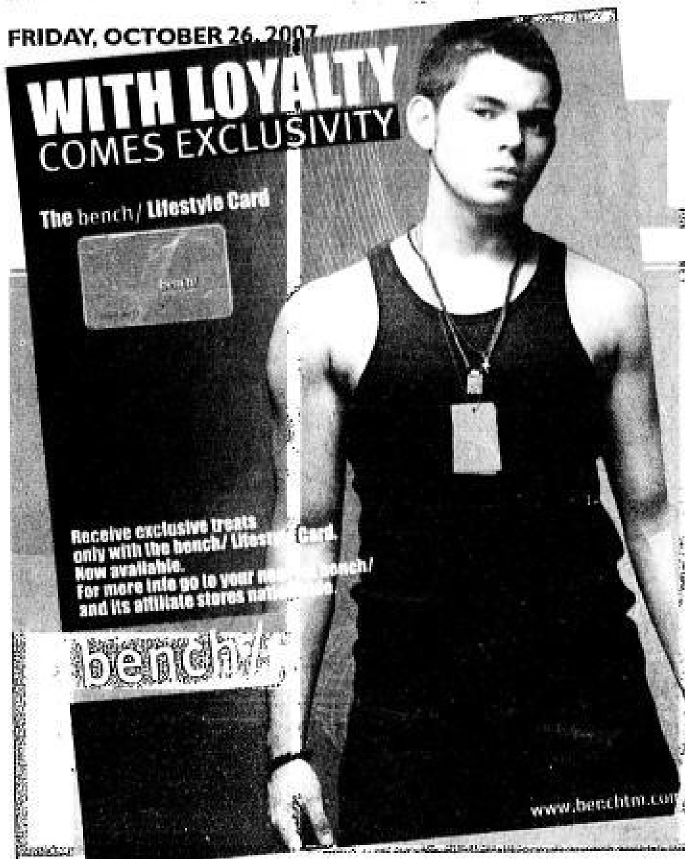
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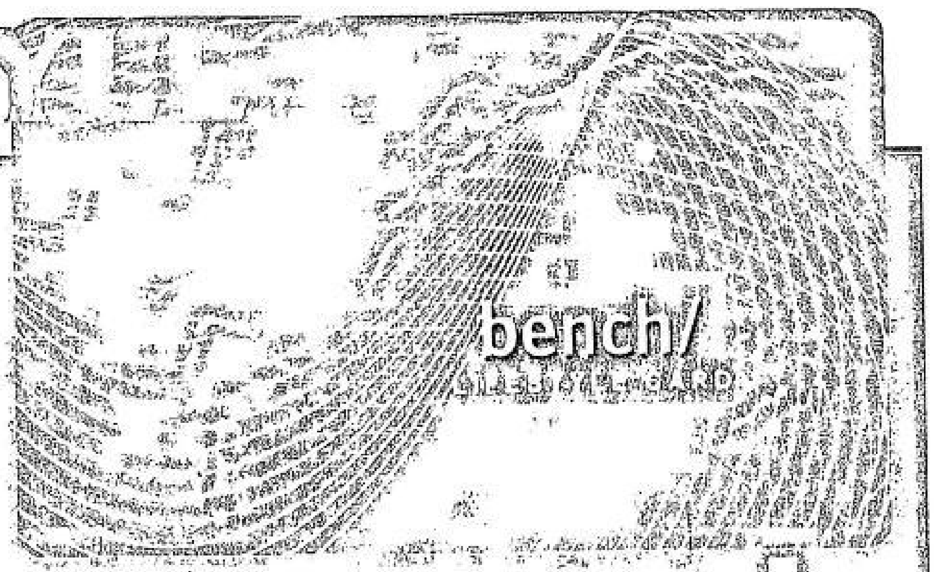


Bench offers loyal customers a chance to maximize their purchases and earn freebies

Shopping rewards

By Irene C. Perez

IF THERE'S A FASHION HOUSE that knows how to dress up the Pinoy, it's Bench. From a simple shop that carries only men's casuals, Bench has become a total clothing and lifestyle store that maintains a steady mix of comfort, quirk and style in its collections.

Bench, often referred to as a revolutionary retail brand, now offers loyal customers a chance to maximize their purchases and earn freebies—the Bench Lifestyle Card way.

This rebate card, endorsed by actor Richard Gutierrez, allows frequent shoppers to earn points with every purchase not just from Bench boutiques, but from affiliated shops as well. Accumulated points are saved in a personal "E-purse" and its corresponding cash value can be used to buy more items. And the best part? You can have the Bench Lifestyle Card for a one-time payment of only P100.

Earn more, shop more

The recently launched Bench Lifestyle Card gives buyers one point per P1 purchase for cash payments, and 0.5 points for credit and debit cards; every 10,000 points earns you P200 for your E-wallet.

That gives shopaholics more reason to splurge on chic and trendy ensembles from Herbench and Kashieca, and add more oomph to your wardrobe with sexy lingerie from Bench_body.

Guys, meanwhile, could stock up on denims and basic shirts from Bench and Human. For more formal affairs, Celio specializes in streamlined menswear.

Go shoe crazy as the Bench Lifestyle Card is also valid in Charles & Keith, Pedro and Aldo.

Kikay kittens and bath-and-body fanatics could have a beauty binge in The Faceshop and PCX (where P4 gives you a point per cash purchase and 0.5 for credit and debit cards). Then cap off that new wardrobe with a makeover at Bench Fix Salon.

The whole family could also take a trip to the nearest Superbench which houses pretty much everything—from baby stuff, personal-care and hygiene products, even yummy snacks and summer picnic baskets!

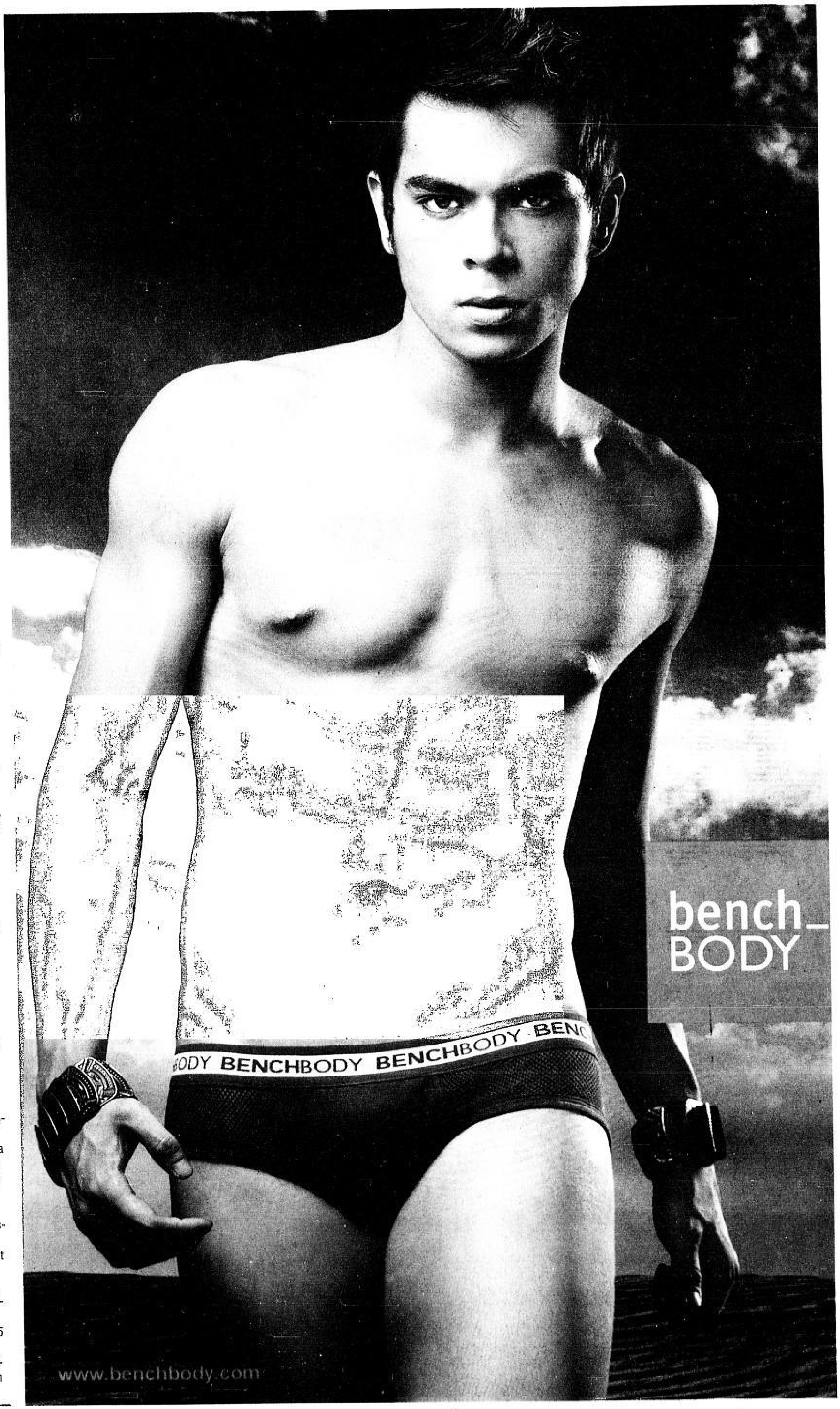
You can update your home furnishings, too, with choice pieces from Dimensione.

Double your points with "Don't Be the Last One" promo and shop from 10 a.m.-12 noon until Nov. 15. More freebies and discounts await cardholders, too.

Basic Bench facts

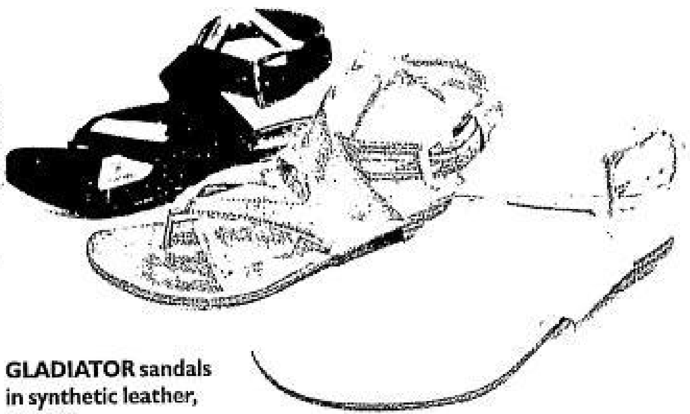
Ever wondered which is the bestseller among the Bench bin? Here are more reasons to swipe that Bench Lifestyle Card:

- Men's clothes and accessories are the No. 1 bestseller. Women's items are only a close second.
- Guys love vintage-fit tee shirts, and girls buy baby tees the most.
- For kids, Tweeners tees for kids ages 6-12 usually get sold out.
- Bench_body item faves are fashion bra and underwear sets for ladies, and colored briefs and undershirts for men (where else could you find citrus-colored boxers or camo-print briefs?)
- Caps and bags sell fastest in the accessories department.
- Pretty When Pinched lip and cheek tint and Lip Plump Shine two-in-one lip gloss and plumper are makeup staples to many.
- Bubblegum scents are the most popular with teens.
- Bench buyers are within the 13 and 35 age range.
- The fashion savvy troop to Bench outlets during the peak summer-month March and the holiday season.



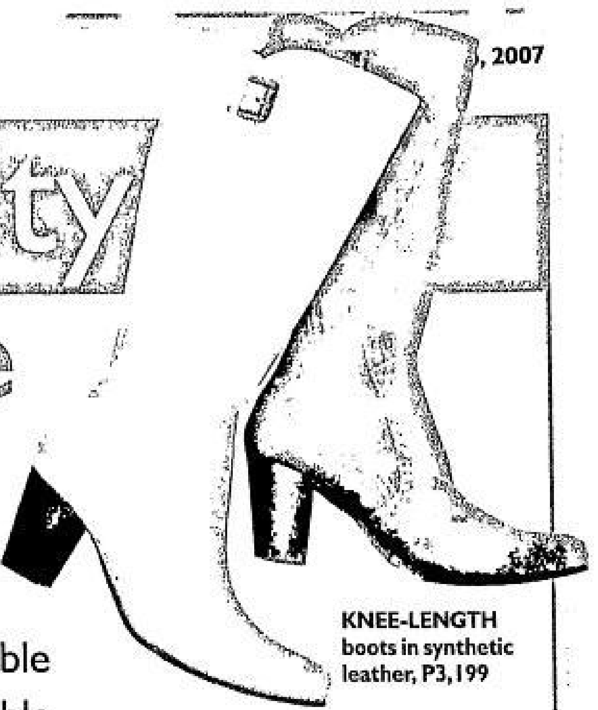
Designer-quality shoes you'd love

PEEP-TOE ankle-strap heels in black and cream, P2,199



GLADIATOR sandals in synthetic leather, P1,399

Pamper your feet with fashionable but comfortable footwear from Charles & Keith



KNEE-LENGTH boots in synthetic leather, P3,199

Text by Fran Katigbak
Photos by August dela Cruz

SHOES CAN MAKE OR BREAK A LOOK. Or they can just break how your feet look, that is, if you insist on trudging on that ill-fitting pair.

Thick corns, discoloration on toes and dry, hard heels are not exactly pretty. Plus these foot issues could end up causing more discomfort than you can tolerate.

We suggest discarding footwear that abuse the condition of your feet, but of course not for anything unstylish and passé.

Filipinas can now pamper their feet while on the go with fashionable but comfortable footwear courtesy of Singapore-based brand Charles & Keith.

Founded by brothers Charles and Keith Wong in 1996, the shoe boutique opened its first branch at Amara Shopping Center in Singapore.

The Wong brothers saw the opportunity in retailing fashionable ladies' shoes in the early '90s when the locals depended on pricey, unbefitting imported shoes. They have since designed and manufactured stylish ladies footwear to suit Asian feet.

With 18 stores in Singapore, the brand has also been brought to Indonesia, Australia, the Philippines, Japan, Thailand, Taiwan, India, UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Brunei.

Trendy designs

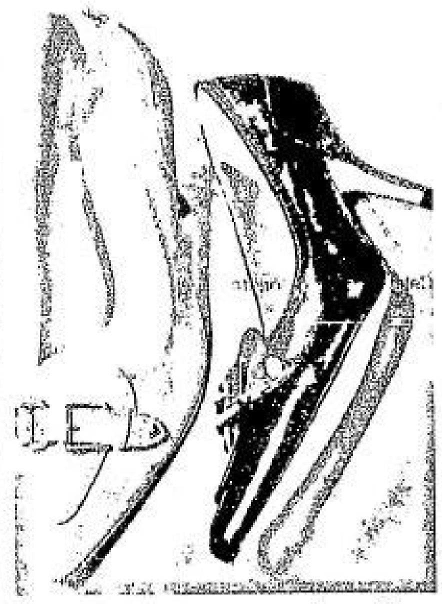
Charles & Keith has a pool of young designers always on the lookout for trends in the runways of Europe and other parts of the world. This exposure translates into various shoe designs in the season's latest colors, fit for casual, office or formalwear.

In the TriNoma branch, Charles & Keith features designer-quality but sanely priced pumps, wedges, stilettos, boots, peep-toes, ballet flats, gladiator sandals in materials such as suedette, faux snakeskin, patent, genuine and synthetic leather.

Aside from the meticulous design process, the brand also puts premium on constantly expanding research and development. Every season the footwear collection is updated, along with a line of accessories like bags, shades and belts to match.

After all, the hip, sophisticated, fashion-conscious woman Charles & Keith caters to should not expect any less if she truly values her appearance and, yes, the condition of her feet.

Charles & Keith branches are in TriNoma, Glorietta, Bonifacio High Street, Alabang Town Center, Ayala Cebu, Festival Mall Alabang, Robinsons Galleria, SM Megamall. A branch will open soon in SM Cebu.



LEATHER pumps in brown and camel from the Signature Collection, P3,250

PEEP-TOE denim wedges, P1,999

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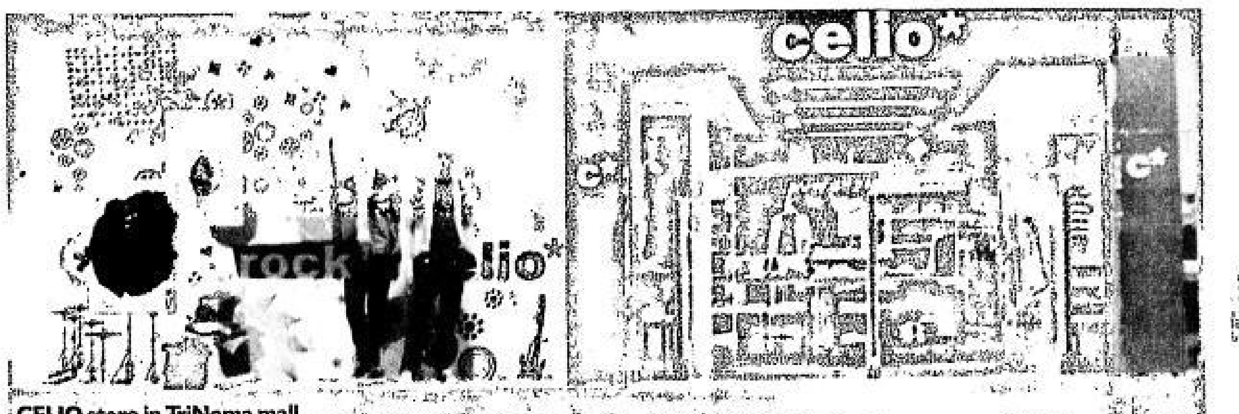


CELIO store in TriNoma mall

Slim, sleek and sharp

Text by Mary Ann I. Rañola
Photos by August dela Cruz

Celio's comfortable, stylish clothes with lean cuts make you look tall and slender

MOST MEN DON'T WANT TO BE bothered with dressing up, looking stylish and slimming down, unless of course it can be done under five minutes.

International menswear brand Celio offers just that in its easy-to-wear Fall-Winter Collection. The general idea is slim fit and neutrals.

Striped pullover sweaters, military-style jackets and slim-cut jeans in subdued and neutral colors instantly add flair to your ensemble without you having to worry about complementary color combination.

The collection consists of comfortable, stylish clothes with lean cuts to make you look tall and slender. The predominant colors are browns, dark greens and grays for a more slimming look. Military style and subtle prints in stripes and checks are the trend.

Jackets, as opposed to coats and other thick outer garments, are more wearable in a tropical country.

Silky on skin

The Celio jackets may look bulky and heavy, but when worn, the inside fabrics feel silky on the skin as you pull it on and the materials used have a cashmere texture to it, perfect to keep you comfortably warm.

Unlike most winter clothes that add more weight to your body, Celio jackets have a slimming cut. These cling more closely to the body and fit more snugly than other oversized-looking jackets.

The olive-green officer-style jacket is a definite must-have. This versatile piece is neither too funky for corporate wear nor too dressy for everyday. It can be worn at the office, on a night out, or even when malling. With precise details such as shoulder tabs, copper buttons and ribbed high collar, this jacket surely makes a statement.

To achieve a sporty look, get one of Celio's sportswear jackets. It is a military-style jacket in cotton twill with zipped chest and flap hand pockets, detailed with overstitching, shoulder tabs, big printed patches in shel fabric at the back. The jacket can either be buttoned up or tied at the waist with drawstrings stitched inside.

Well-defined details

Celio plays with details that are distinct and well-defined. These are also evident in the trousers—from cargo pants to office slacks. Bright-colored stitching creates contrast to dark-washed jeans, while crumpled hemlines and subtle rips and shreds add character.

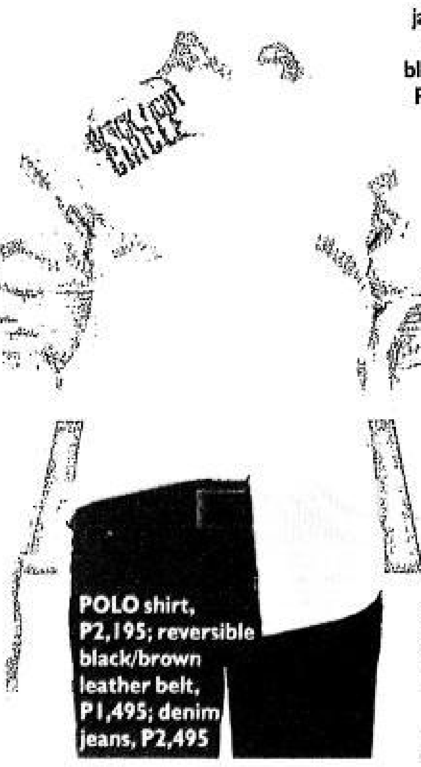
Stripes, horizontal and vertical, are common in Celio's casual wear. Subdued colors, such as deep purples, khakis and charcoal grays, offset the illusion of added weight created by horizontal stripes. On the other hand, vertical stripes are incorporated in Celio's long-sleeve polos and pinstripe pants that are cut narrow and long to make you look tall and lean.

Buckle leather belts, sling bags, socks and underwear are also available.

Celio began in France in 1985 and has since opened branches in 40 other countries, including the Philippines in 2001.

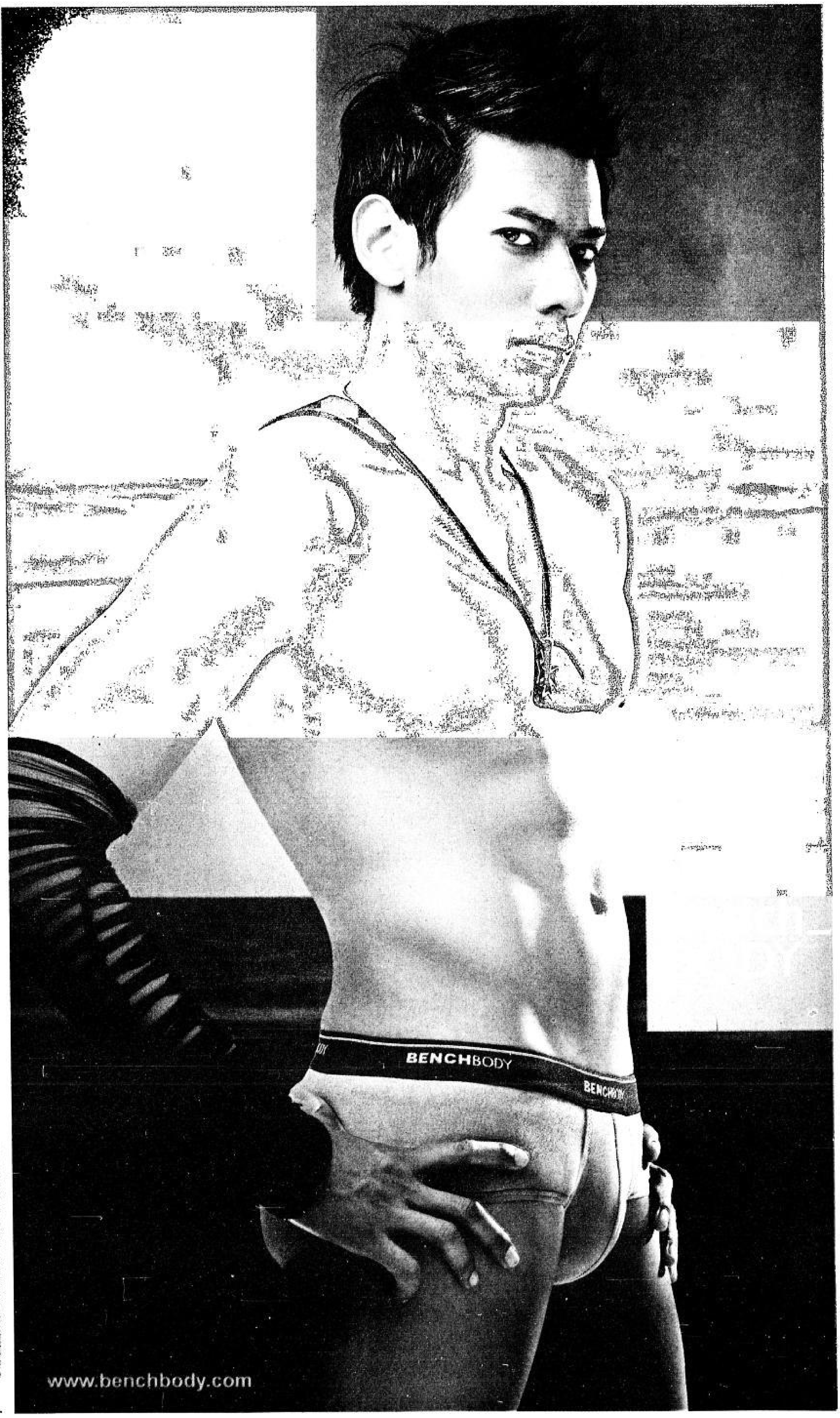
Celio stores are located at 3/L TriNoma Mall, G/L Greenbelt 3, 2/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall, G/L Power Plant Mall, 2/L East Wing Robinsons Galleria, G/L Gateway Mall, 2/L Mall of Asia, Upper G/L Alabang Town Center, and G/L Ayala Center Cebu.

LONG-SLEEVE shirt, P2,195; army green leather belt, P595



POLO shirt, P2,195; reversible black/brown leather belt, P1,495; denim jeans, P2,495

"OFFICER-STYLE" jacket, P4,895; white polo shirt, P1,795; black tee, P1,495; belt, P1,695; denim jeans, P3,495



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Association (CREBA)

A special supplement on the 34th Annual Convention

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THE LAND SECTOR'S QUANTUM LEAP TO THE FUTURE

Over the past years, the Philippine real estate market has cautiously soared due to sound policies of the government. Foreign transactions have increased, bank loans have been made easy, and the growing number of professional OFWs have led to more investments in real estate. The challenge for the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations (CREBA), Inc. is to sustain this growth. For which reason, CREBA now looks at various methods, like employing information technology, global marketing strategies, and other financing methods, to meet that challenge.

Considering that it is human nature to initially pour money into sectors that people see as bullish, the property sector shall remain upbeat. To describe the real estate sector's journey in the next few years, CREBA has chosen this year's convention theme to be ***"The Land Sector's Quantum Leap to the Future."*** *Undoubtedly the fastest growing local economy in the country, the Island of Cebu, is ideal for CREBA's convention. The Queen City of the South has proven its capability and economic track record as it is fast becoming the IT and Call Center Capital of the Philippines.*

Strengthening the bonds once again, CREBA links arms with government as it tries to improve the efficiency of the housing market. As the country's leading newspaper, The Philippine Daily Inquirer, on the other hand, serves as CREBA's official journalistic voice.

As many people are eager to buy homes and other properties, CREBA will do its best in helping them realize that they've made the right choice.

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MESSAGES

Republic of the Philippines
Malacañan Palace
Manila

Warmest greetings to all the members, officers and guests of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations, Inc. (CREBA) as you hold your Annual National Convention.

The Philippines has vast land resources which can be developed into business and residential sites. Given our economic turnaround during the first half of this year, I dare say that this is an excellent time for our people to invest in real etate.

I am glad that this year CREBA is focused on the use of advanced information technology, global marketing strategies, and various financing methods in helping sustain our economic gains.

This convention, with the theme, "The Land Sector's Quantum Leap to the Future," is truly relevant because it complements my administration's goal to provide homes to every Filipino family. Be with us in completing this journey.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the Vice-President
Housing & Urban Dev't Coordinating Council

Warmest greetings to the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations, Inc. (CREBA), as it once again gathers its members and real estate professionals and businessmen from all over the country for its annual convention.

The CREBA National Convention 2007 comes at a time when the boom in the real estate sector underscores its role as one of the main drivers of growth in our country's upbeat economy. This is a good chance for all stakeholders to take a look at the big picture and figure out the next steps the industry must take to sustain its current growth. The theme for this event, "The Land Sector's Quantum Leap to the Future," expresses CREBA's optimism and strong aspiration to bring Philippine real estate to new heights.

I share this aspiration, not only for what it means to the industry and the national economy, but for what it can bring to our people - more high quality homes at affordable prices, and more job opportunities for our workers.

I hope that all the participants in this convention will make good use of this time to learn about new tools and new directions in the industry. Together, let us all equip ourselves to carve out a better future for all Filipinos.

Mabuhay ang CREBA!

NOLI "KABAYAN" DE CASTRO
Vice-President & HUDCC Chair

Republic of the Philippines
Senate of the Philippines
Manila

I extend my warmest greetings and felicitations to the officers and members of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations, Inc. (CREBA) and to all the participants to the CREBA National Convention 2007 slated on October 25-27, 2007 at the Waterfront Hotel & Casino in Lahug, Cebu City.

Being a part of the real estate and housing construction industries before entering the government service, I personally saw on a first-hand experience how the real estate industry has substantially done its own share in powering the country's economy and sustaining it through the years.

Without a doubt, it has productively contributed to the utilization of advanced information technology, global marketing strategies, various financing methods concerning the land sector and, most of all, for the significant increase in the generation of employment among our countrymen.

As such, this year's convention theme "The Land Sector's Quantum Leap to the Future" clearly signifies the CREBA's continuing dedication and commitment in further enhancing the role of the real estate industry in the development and progress of our country.

With the gathering of around 500 developers, contractors, landowners, and other professionals and businessmen from all over the Philippines in this Convention, I am looking forward for a fruitful exchange of insights and ideas on how best to meet the great challenges and demands of the future.

Through "sipag at tiyaga," I am certain that CREBA will be able to fully realize all its noble goals and endeavors for our country's land sector.

More power and mabuhay po ang CREBA!

MANUEL B. VILLAR
Senate President

Republic of the Philippines
Senate of the Philippines
Manila

The Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations plays a crucial role in the utilization and management of land, a very limited natural resource even with 30 million hectares of it.

Identifying and developing land suitable for human settlement for residential use is a sensitive task in that it directly competes with agricultural and industrial uses. Likewise, the industry has to confront the need to set aside untouched natural formations like forests for future generations.

Growth in the real estate sector greatly affects over-all growth of the economy with its potential to create jobs and to increase demand for other goods after the construction phase. This ultimately benefits the Filipino family such that government is eager to provide the environment conducive to huge investments in view of our desire to erase the backlog in housing. Thus, I note that leaders in the industry have also been keenly keeping up with market developments for their own economic viability and capacity to deliver high-quality structures with well-designed communities.

In tandem with helping provide a good investment climate, I am crafting legislation that will help achieve harmony and dynamism among developers, residents and government. I am hopeful that laws affecting you will be approved, among them the National Land Use Policy.

I also take note of the efforts of real estate developers to seek to satisfy the need for shelter of all types of consumers, from the regular office employee to overseas Filipino workers up to the leisure villages for our Balikbayan and foreign retirees. I also admire the private sector efforts in socialized housing, slum improvement and elimination of urban blight.

I look forward to partnering with you and seeking your expertise. I hope that our efforts will be translated into integrated communities that use energy and water resources wisely, incorporate native materials in design and construction and blends development with a healthy natural environment.

JUAN MIGUEL ZUBIRI
Chair, Committee on Housing

House of Representatives
Quezon City

My warmest greetings to the men and women of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations, Inc. (CREBA) as you hold your Annual Convention on October 25-27, 2007.

I congratulate CREBA for being a solid organization of the country's expanding real estate industry and for its contribution to raising the bar in commercial, residential and mixed-type land development.

We must continue to work as partners in establishing the Philippines as a premier destination for real estate investments. Let us catch Asia's next wave of economic growth be offering attractive alternatives to global industries, OFWs, retirees, and our very own business and homeowners.

We in the House of Representatives will continue to focus on legislation that would generate invigorating reforms to open up the country's economy, by raising the country's competitiveness through lower costs of doing business and improved worker productivity, modernized infrastructure and greater access to quality education.

By working together, instead of dwelling on our differences, we achieve greater goals for the sake of our country and countrymen.

Mabuhay!

JOSE DE VENECIA, JR.
House Speaker

House of Representatives
Quezon City

My warmest greetings to the delegates, participants, members, officers and organizers of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations, Inc. (CREBA), for holding its Annual Convention on October 25-27, 2007 at the Waterfront Hotel & Casino, Lahug, Cebu City.

Being part of the housing industry, I am proud of the CREBA Convention, a gathering of around 500 developers, contractors, landowners, and other professionals, and businessmen from all over the Philippines, which aims to highlight the real estate industry's role in powering the economy and sustaining it by employing advanced information technology, global marketing strategies and various financing methods.

I appreciate this year's theme "The Land Sector's Quantum Leap to the Future."

This event surely provides a venue that is suitable and relevant where concerned stakeholders in the industry offer updates on recent developments and trends as well as the latest innovations and technology of their products and services is deeply attuned with the government effort to infuse more vigor into the property and housing industry to boost the national economy.

It is also my hope, being the Chairman of the Housing Committee and Urban Development, that our government will continue playing its vital role to support the property and housing business by coming up with unique and viable investment, as well as financial package opportunities. We enjoin everyone to be part of this undertaking.

Lastly, allow me to express my appreciation for all your unfailing energy and fervent enthusiasm to preserve the goals and ideals of the property market which remains close to my heart not just in terms of profession, but as a lifetime commitment in providing decent homes to all sectors of the society.

Again, congratulations to the organizers and to everyone who made this occasion possible and meaningful.

More Power! MABUHAY!

RODOLFO G. VALENCIA
Chair, Committee on Housing

CREBA
Chamber of Real Estate & Builders' Associations, Inc.

CREBA's convention theme "Quantum Leap to the Future" was precisely so worded in anticipation of Government's approval of an earlier proposal by CREBA for bolder and stronger measures to attain a faster and more meaningful economic growth anchored on the strength and patriotism of our own people.

CREBA salutes government for its kind and warm response to CREBA's advocacy in this regard. To know that government and private sector partnership is at work is gratifying enough. To be accommodated with a hand extended longer than usual is exulting even more.

It is hoped that CREBA's proposal will be finalized soonest. That way, we can just as soon commence to establish the machinery that will enable Government to fund its infrastructure needs and for CREBA to help government resolve homelessness and squatting utilizing purely private funds. Indeed, if Government is so minded, we could even be able to liquidate our foreign debt in God's appointed time.

MANUEL M. SERRANO
Founder & Chairman of the Board

CREBA
Chamber of Real Estate & Builders' Associations, Inc.

It is my great pleasure to welcome our convention partners, guests, delegates, and all my fellow CREBANS to the 2007 CREBA National Convention at the Waterfront Hotel, Cebu City, with the theme, "The Land Sector's Quantum Leap to the Future".

Since the birth of Creba 34 years ago, we Crebans and our counterparts in the public housing sector gather once more as a single body of real estate and housing stakeholders to address our common concerns and in fellowship.

Convening the various stakeholders in the industry is itself a manifestation of our continued hope for the betterment of our industry. And we have the unswerving enthusiasm and ardour of all you who have expressed your support as sponsors, delegates, and guests to thank for.

At a time with the Philippines is on the cusp of what could be the country's biggest property boom in nearly three decades, fueled by money from overseas Filipinos, investments from businessmen and increased government spending, the holding of this convention could well serve as a celebration of the government and private sector partnership that serve as a springboard for the industry to soar to even greater heights.

To the convention delegates, our warmest welcome. Your coming over is a clear sign of your desire to be involved and to be counted in the common effort to push forward a truly national shelter program for all Filipinos.

To all our supporters in and out of CREBA, not only our thanks but our assurance as well that your help will be put to best use.

PEDRO C. TABIO
National President

CREBA
Chamber of Real Estate & Builders' Associations, Inc.

The real estate plays a major role in pump-priming the economy and stimulating sectoral growth. Its businesses and operations are generating a multiplier of economic benefits, such as provision of employment, promotion of entrepreneurial activities and investment generation.

Over the past several years, the Philippine real estate industry is enjoying quite a rapid pace of progress. The proliferation of business outsourcing activities and growing number of "global Filipinos" have led more investments on real estate. And the challenge for us now is to sustain this growth by aligning our industry to meet global trends and demands. For which reason, CREBA has adopted an IT-centered approach, global marketing strategies, new financing schemes, and other viable innovations to meet today's challenges.

Today is, indeed, a challenging yet wonderful time for the industry. And there are still a lot of great opportunities ahead of us for the coming years. Thus, I would like to thank all of you for your continuing participation and support to our cause. Thank you to our Cebuano CREBAN's who made us feel most welcome and more. Doghang Salamat sa inyong mainitun ug kinasing-kasing na pag abiba namo diri sa Cebu. In a special way, I would also like to express my sincerest gratitude to the convention team: the men and women who made my role as Convention Chair worthwhile and unforgettable. Three cheers to all of you!

Together with the government, let us attain a quantum leap into the future.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

Editha L. Manansala
EDITHA L. MANANSALA
VP for Public Affairs &
Convention Overall Chairperson

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PROGRAMME

DAY 1: 25 OCTOBER 2007 (Thursday)

6:00 am	CREBA Golf Tournament	Alta Vista Golf Course, Tee-off: 6:00 – 9:00 am
9:00-12:00	Arrival of Delegates / Registration	CREBA Secretariat
	Courtesy Call	National & Cebu Chapter Officers
2:00–5:00pm	Chapter Orientation Workshop	**MR. ANGEL G. VIVAS, JR.**, VP for Chapter Affairs
	Business Tour & Site Seeing	Cebu Chapter
5:00	Awarding of Winners - Golf Tournament	Plantation Bay - Mactan
6:00	Welcome Dinner & Chapter's Night	Plantation Bay – Mactan
	"Salsa & Samba Dance Competition"	Attire: Caribbean

DAY 2: 26 OCTOBER 2007 (Friday)

6:00-9:00am	Breakfast	Arctic Hall
	Registration	CREBA Secretariat
9:00-9:30	Opening of CREBA Convention Exhibit	**VICE MAYOR MICHAEL L. RAMA**, Cebu City
9:30–12:00	OPENING CEREMONIES	
	Entry of Colors	University of Cebu Cadets
	Parade of Chapters	Presidents of CREBA Chapters
	Doxology	**CREBA CHORALE**
	National Anthem & CREBA Hymn	**MS. LYNN B. MACEDA**, Member-CREBA, Inc.
	Call to Order & Opening Remarks	**MR. PEDRO C. TARIO**, National President-CREBA, Inc.
	Welcome Remarks	**VICE MAYOR MICHAEL L. RAMA**, Cebu City
	Report on National Convention 2006	**MS. TECHIE P. BAUTISTA,** EVP & Overall Chair-2006 Convention
	Overview of the Convention	**MS. EDITHA L. MANANSALA**, Overall Chair-2007 Convention
	Introduction of Keynote Speaker	**USEC. LUCILLE P. ORTILE**, Sec. Gen. - HUDCC
	KEYNOTE SPEECH	**VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO** Chairman Housing & Urban Dev't Coordinating Council
12:00-1:00	LUNCH	
1:00–2:00pm	SYMPOSIUM 1: ***"INVEST IN CENTRAL VISAYAS WITH CEBU AS GATEWAY"***	**USEC. OSCAR P. PALABYAB** Tourism Services & Regional Offices Department of Tourism
2:00–5:00	SYMPOSIUM 2: ***"TITLE WARRANTY & OTHER CREBA BREAKTHROUGH INITIATIVES"***	
	Title Warranty - CREBA's Seal of Authenticity	**DR. JAIME A. CURA** Chief Executive Officer, CREBALAND
	Using Technology in the War Against Fake Land Titles	**ATTY. ERWIN TIAMZON** Former Director, Land Management Bureau
	CREBA Breakthrough Initiatives -Title Verification & Torrens System - Mobilizing OFW Funds for Financial Self-Sufficiency: a) In Infrastructure Development; b) In Eradicating Homelessness & Illegal Squatting. -LGU-Private Investor Partnership for Poverty Alleviation	**ATTY. MANUEL M. SERRANO** Founding Chairman, CREBA
5:00-6:00	Business Matching Session	**ARCH. STEVE R. OLONAN** Convention Overall Vice Chair
7:00	Gala Night Attire: Formal (Gown / Coat & Tie)	Arctic Hall

DAY 3: 27 OCTOBER 2007 (Saturday)

6:00-8:30am	Breakfast	Arctic Hall
8:30-9:00	Invocation	**MR. EDDIE O. PESTAÑO**, President-Neg. Occ. Chapter
	National Anthem & CREBA Hymn	Chapter Representative
9:00–11:00	SYMPOSIUM 3:	
	"OPPORTUNITIES IN SPECIAL PURPOSE ASSET VEHICLES (SPAV)"	**MR. FERNANDO B. CABALLA** Director, Supervision & Examination Dept. III Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
	"BUSINESS PROCESS OUTSOURCING ITS IMPACT ON REAL ESTATE"	**MR. OSCAR R. SAÑEZ** Chief Executive Officer Business Process Association - Philippines
	"BOI INCENTIVES FOR REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY"	**MR. RUDY B. CAÑA** Director, Project Evaluation & Registration Department Board of Investments
	OPEN FORUM	**MR. JOSE ANGIOLO C. LEDESMA,** Moderator Exec. Asst. to the Vice-Chairman & EVP, Moldex Group
11:00-12:00	Introduction of Keynote Speaker	**MS. PURITA R. SOLIVEN**, President-CIFI & CREBA Past President
	Keynote Speech	**CONG. RODOLFO G. VALENCIA,** Chair, Committee on Housing, House of Representatives
	HOUSING FORUM	**ATTY. FERMIN T. ARZAGA** President, Social Housing Finance Corporation **MR. GONZALO B.A. BONGOLAN** President, Home Guaranty Corporation **ATTY. ROMULO Q. FABUL** Commissioner & CEO, HLURB **MR. FEDERICO A. LAXA** General Manager, National Housing Authority **ATTY. ROMERO F.S. QUIMBO** President & CEO, Pag-IBIG Fund **MR. JOSEPH PETER S. SISON** President, NHMFC
12:00-1:00	RECOGNITION OF THE 2007	**DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR AWARDEES**
	LUNCH	
1:00–2:00pm	SYMPOSIUM 4: ***"OFW REQUIREMENTS FOR REAL ESTATE"***	**DEP. ADMIN. NORIEL P. DEVANADERA** Deputy Administrator for Operations, OWWA
2:00-2:30	Recap for Symposia 1,2, 3 & 4	**DIR. JEANETTE E. CRUZ**, HUDCC Dep. Chief for Program Mgt & Admin. Group, Convention 2007
2:30–3:00	Adoption of Convention Resolutions	**MR. PEDRO C. TARIO,** National President
	Acceptance of Resolutions	**CONG. RODOLFO G. VALENCIA** **ASEC. PAMELA B. FELIZARTA** Deputy Secretary General, HUDCC
	Formal Closing of the Convention	**MR. PEDRO C. TARIO**
3:00-5:00	Joint Meeting of the CREBA National Officers and Chapter Presidents	**MR. PEDRO C. TARIO** Presiding Officer
6:00	Farewell Night: "CREBA Singing Extravaganza!" Attire: Blue & White	

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In line with the vision of Vice President Noli de Castro, concurrent Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development and Coordinating Council (HUDCC), to bring benefits of loan relief to the economically-distressed housing borrowers and in order to encourage them to renew their delinquent loans and afford the monthly payments, the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC) has waived the previously-required downpayment equivalent to 10% of the gross interest-bearing portion of the restructured loan.

The NHMFC Management announced that in lieu of the 10% downpayment, the borrower needs only to pay a minimum of P1,000.00 plus all unpaid housing insurance premiums.

These include premiums for the Home Contributory Fund (HCF) and Home Finance Corporation (HFC) premiums in case of Folio I accounts.

In a maximized effort to reconfigurate its collection sytem for a more intensified collection servicing, NHMFC has also made the payment of Real Estate Tax as an optional requirement for submission in applying for the Special Repayment Program (SRP).

SRP allows the restructuring of all housing loan accounts that are in arrears, including all other accounts which have previously availed of the regular loan restructuring program under R.A. 8501 and retains the interest rate of the original loan, with affordable monthly amortizations payable for at least 15 years, or the remaining term of the loan, whichever is longer.

For particulars, all interested borrowers may visit or communicate with NHMFC's Collection and Accounts Management Group, located at 2nd Floor, Filomena Bldg., 104 Amorsolo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City with Tel Nos. 817-6023/893-1501 loc. 340. For regional accounts, they may visit or communicate to any NHMFC satellite office nearest them.

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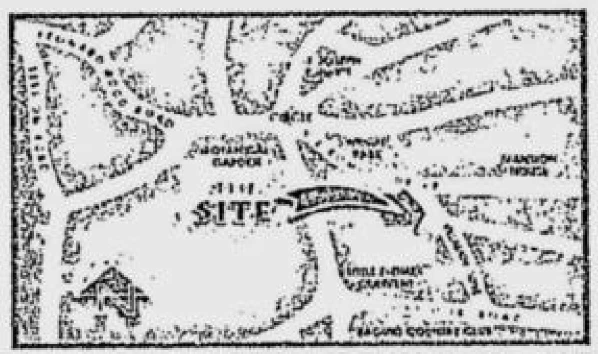

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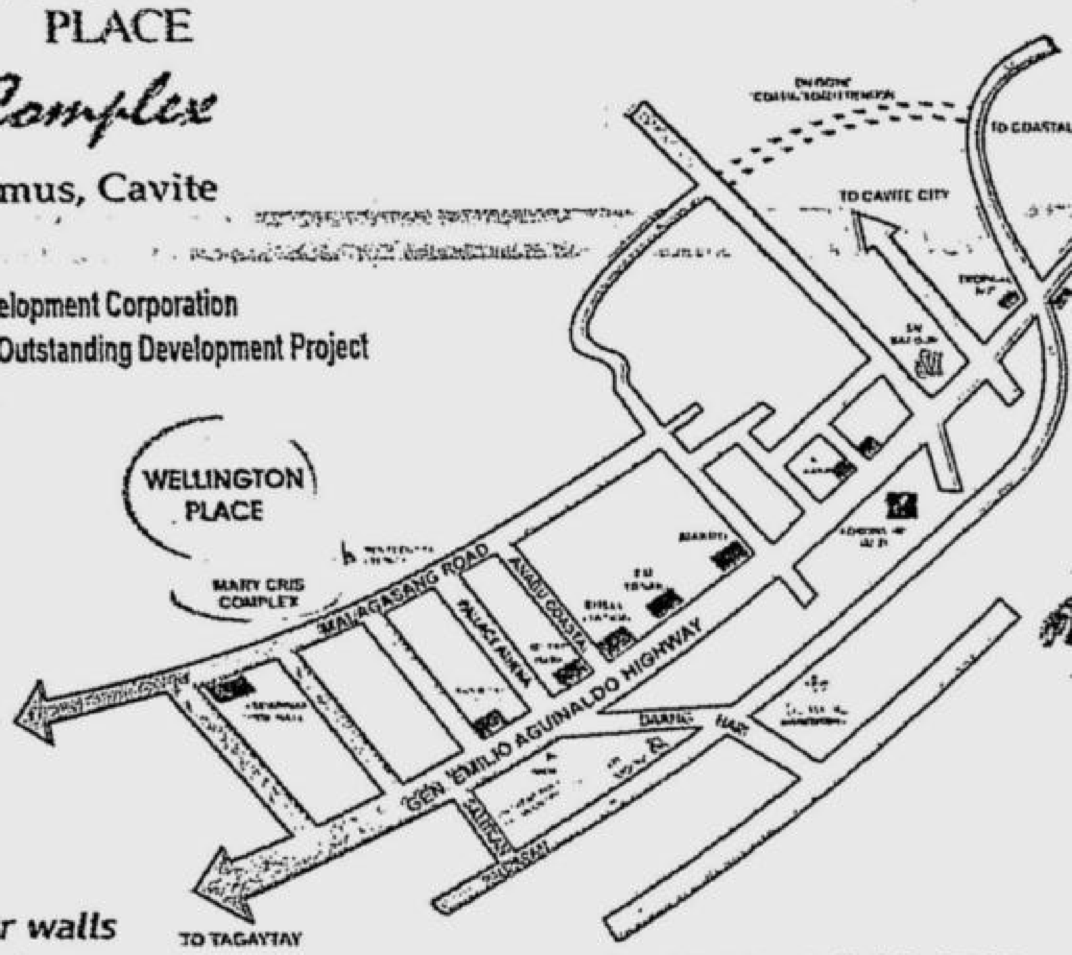

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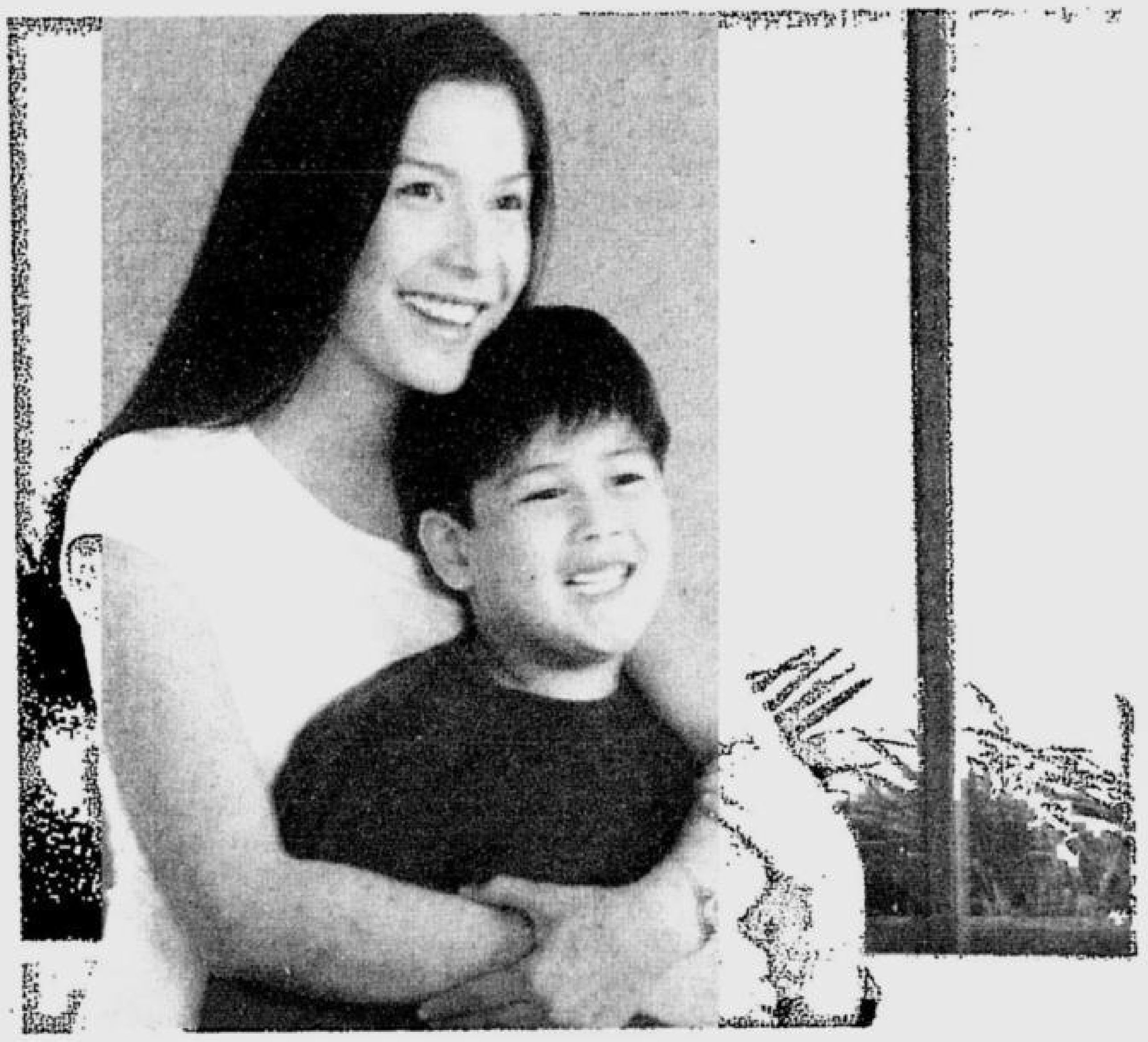

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THE WAR AGAINST FAKE LAND TITLES

FAKE LAND TITLES

The Economy's Gangrene

FAKE OR FRAUDULENT LAND TITLES HAVE PLAGUED the Philippine economy for years. Over the decades, corruption and the dismal state of the country's land and titling records have provided a fertile ground for fake title syndicates to thrive.

This has severely eroded the public's faith in a Torrens title which, under the law, is supposed to be the best evidence of land ownership.

Victims of fake titles have suffered losses amounting to billions of pesos. Not even the seasoned real estate industry players have been spared. Courts are clogged with cases and controversies involving land titles or claims.

Many legitimate landowners have either lost their lands to land grabbers with spurious titles, or collectively spent hundreds of millions over the decades in costly litigations just to defend their titles in court. In the Maysilo Estate controversy, for instance, the MWSS lost a portion of its lands in 1992, and the long-held titles of the Manotoks and Araneta Institute of Agriculture were voided in a controversial Supreme Court decision in 2005.

Even underprivileged beneficiaries of housing projects have lost their government-awarded titles, though no fault of theirs.

Very recently, lot owners of the North Fairview Park Subdivision (now Neapolitan) in Novaliches woke up to the news of a Regional Trial Court order threatening to divest them of their lands in what appears to be a land-grabbing attempt.

Are banks immune to fake titles?

Many Supreme Court cases reveal that banks, despite their vaunted "due diligence," have not been immune to fake titles. The various disclaimers in the auction of bank ROPOAs indicate the banks' uncertainty as to the integrity of the titles in their inventories.

The frightening question is: How much of the banking system's collateral inventory is covered by fake/fraudulent titles? Equally frightening is the question: ***if banks are not immune to fake titles, what of the ordinary buyer or investor who is not as well-versed in title verification?***

Interviews with bank officers revealed the following:

- Title verification by banks is conducted by appraisers and/or credit investigators (CIs) who are neither lawyers nor geodetic engineers;
- Such verification normally involves only (a) a trace-back at the Register of Deeds (RD), (b) obtaining a tax clearance, and (c) conducting ocular inspection;
- Banks lack technical capability to undertake accurate technical analysis of land titles and survey plans; and
- Instances of collusion between the borrower and the appraiser/CI have been discovered.

This limited title verification process used to suffice under the jurisprudential doctrine of buyer or mortgagee in good faith. However, from a study of decided cases in the last 2 decades, the Supreme Court – perhaps due to increased incidence of land grabbing and title faking – appears to have been veering towards requiring a much greater degree of caution and diligence, considering that (1) what is at stake is the stability of the banking system, and (2) the monies lent out by banks largely belong to the public.

In-depth studies also reveal that the limited verification by banks is largely insufficient in determining the following:

- Is the certificate of title genuine?
- Are the titles traced at the RD the result of "saksak-bunot" or not? The records in the entire history of the title are dispersed in various agencies and regional offices involved in the titling process. But since the usual verification process is focused on the RD, this is also the frontline of "saksak-bunot operations."
- Is the land subjected to ocular inspection really the land described in the title, or did the loan applicant point the appraiser to a different land? Is the land really part of an originally decreed/titled land? Were the subdivisions/consolidations throughout its history technically accurate and validly effected?
- Was the OCT that emanated either from an administrative patent or judicial decree validly issued? Were the transfers down the line validly or regularly effected? Are all the title records consistent with each other, and consistent with historical land records, laws and regulations?
- Is the borrower really the registered owner, or merely an impostor?
- Is the title free of encroachment or overlapping, fatal closure error or other technical defects, double titling, falsification, fraud, or tampering?
- Can the title withstand judicial scrutiny?

Malignancy

Land is a primary economic resource. Practically all human activity – economic, social or otherwise – are land-based, and land development for various economic activities is the number one economic pump primer.

However, the flow of investment capital into land development activities is dependent on the integrity of a Torrens title, and the stability of an economic enterprise anchored on land largely depends on the absence of land ownership controversy.

The attainment of Government's priority developmental goals – mass housing, ecozone development, agricultural infrastructure development, tourism, manufacturing, and others – primarily hinges on the direction, pace and level of land development activity which, in turn, hinge on the authenticity of Torrens titles.

Prior to undertaking all these activities, first, a suitable parcel of land must be identified; and second, the integrity of title to that land must be established so that ownership issues that may destabilize the investment may be resolved beforehand.

This is why a Lot Plan, and the certified true copy of the Torrens title for the lot, are both required in the application for a development permit or building construction permit, among others.

The malignant impact of fake titles over the entire economic spectrum should thus be readily apparent. Their proliferation makes it difficult to market real property, whether to investors, buyers or lenders. Land transactions – and consequently, development activities – proceed at a retarded pace due to lack of knowledge and extreme difficulty in verifying the reliability of titles.

Widely publicized land scams have made the market cynical, even when presented a certified true copy of the title to the property.

The specter of fake titles also seriously impairs credit availment, to the detriment of otherwise productive enterprises largely dependent on bank financing. The risk factor is perceived to be one of the main reasons for the high loan loss provision requirement imposed by the Bangko Sentral upon banks, which affects the credit supply. It also appears to be the reason for the abnormally low appraisal and loan values given to real estate collateral particularly in the case of non-prime borrowers, which defeats the purpose of banking. And the increased costs of title verification on the part of banks translate to higher lending rates and bank charges, which many SMEs find unaffordable and thus a deterrent to business formation and expansion that the economy badly needs.

Thus, all told, the bane of fake titles severely retards the pace of economic growth at both national and local levels.

Government reform efforts – quo vadis?

In an attempt to arrest the problem and help the public guard against fake titles, the government created several task forces, among them the Land Title Verification Task Force under the Land Registration Authority (LRA).

Sadly for the public, however, in a 2000 document LRA officers discredited the LRA's own task force with the statement that this "became some sort of a 'validation/authentication' of the so-called 'saksak-bunot operations' of a syndicate dealing with fake and spurious titles."

The LRA also embarked on a P13 Billion, 13-year computerization project intended, among others, to provide the public with title information over the internet. However, for several reasons this project has failed to get off the ground.

And even if this LRA project were to bear fruit several years from now, the computerization principle of "garbage-in, garbage out" gives rise to the questions: how much of the LRA or Registers of Deeds records have already been compromised by "saksak-bunot" operations, and what is the assurance that these compromised records will not find their way into the computerized databases?

If and when the LRA project does succeed the information it could later provide the public may be largely inadequate for purposes of determining title integrity. This is because the LRA, not being the only agency involved in the entire titling process, does not have in its custody the complete set of records documenting a title's entire history as it is passed on down the line from the very original title.

For instance, the official land records (i.e. cadastral maps) and the records of the original survey and issuance of the original title are with the Lands Management Bureau (LMB) and the various offices of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), while titles issued under the CARP [i.e. emancipation patents (EP) or certificate of land ownership award (CLOA)] are with the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR).

Sometime in 2000, the LMB under the auspices of the DENR initiated moves to shore up the compromised Torrens System through reforms in land and titling records management.

This effort blossomed into the inter-agency and multi-sectoral LAMP project funded by AusAid and World Bank. The LAMP 1 came up with comprehensive studies and policy recommendations on all aspects of land administration and titling, culminating in the legislative proposals submitted to Congress in 2003.

The DENR estimated a time frame of some 20 years from enactment of the proposed measures for the reforms to show meaningful results. Again, sadly, the reform proposals have been stymied by what the private sector has perceived to be a petty battle for turf among the agencies involved. In the meantime, fictitious "titling" data and tampered records from unabated "saksak bunot" operations continue to pile up and compound the messy state of the country's titling system.

One can almost hear the fake titles syndicates chuckling as they ravage the economy more brazenly than ever before.

[illegible]

Quezon City, Tagaytay, Cavite, Caloocan, and Bulacan are the "hottest spots," being the favorite territories of fake titles syndicates. Other critical areas are the entire National Capital Region (NCR), Rizal, Baguio, Pampanga, Zambales, Palawan, Cebu, Negros Occidental, and Davao.

Clearly, fake titles proliferate in areas where the land market is active due to developmental trends.

The syndicates' favorite targets of attack are titles emanating from the vast friar lands known as Haciendas or Estates, among others, Piedad and Tala Estates in the Quezon City-Caloocan area, Sta. Maria Estate in Bulacan, and Calamba Estate in Laguna. There are 23 such estates throughout the country, totaling some 158,415 hectares.

One of the modus operandi of these syndicates is scouting around for vacant lands, obtaining a copy of the certificate of title covering the land, copying the textual information in that certificate onto a stolen or counterfeit blank form (but indicating a different registered owner), undertaking "saksak-bunot" in connivance with Register of Deeds personnel, then peddling the spurious but seemingly genuine certificate to unsuspecting buyers or lenders.

Another common practice is to pose as the owner of the vacant land and apply for title reconstitution using fraudulent supporting documents.

Generally, a **fake title** is one that was simply manufactured out of nowhere. The form used for the certificate may either be counterfeit (printed by unauthorized parties) or a stolen/pilfered genuine form. In either case the contents are fictitious.

A **fraudulent title** is one where, for instance, the form used may be genuine and registration was effected, but prior to the registration the approved survey plan may have been surreptitiously altered to increase the size of the land. Or registration was obtained using a spurious or falsified deed of conveyance.

An **irregular title** is one which may not be fake or fraudulent, but where, for instance, capital gains taxes were not paid, or some formalities or requirements for registration and issuance were not complied with. The irregularities may or not be curable, depending on the applicable provisions of law.

A **defective title** is one in which, for instance, when plotted or projected against an official map, the land is shown to be floating at sea. Or when the title says the land is located in Lipa, but when plotted, it is shown to be within Calamba. Or the land encroaches on another titled property. Depending on an analysis of the records, a defective title may, or may not, turn out to be fake or fraudulent.

There are many other indicia of spuriousness, fraud, irregularities or defects. The question: ***Would you know how to detect them?***

TITLE WARRANTY

CREBA's Seal of Authenticity

WITH THE RECENT LAUNCHING OF THE CREBALAND TITLE Warranty, CREBA hits back at fake titles syndicates where it would hurt them most, by exposing to their potential victims what their commodity really is – a mere scrap of paper.

Aimed towards strengthening the Torrens system and eventually eradicating fake titles, the pioneering CREBALAND Title Warranty – a prelude to full title insurance – was designed to thoroughly verify/evaluate land titles and provide assurance as to their integrity and reliability.

Helmed by CREBA's leading lights who are widely recognized as land experts by both the government and private sectors; backed by a board of expert consultants who have distinguished themselves in government service in the fields of law, geodetic engineering and land registration/titling; manned by a pool of legal and geosciences specialists and professionals; and linked to its regional network of title researchers through fully computerized operations and mobile computing technology; – the CREBALAND Title Warranty system is so far the only one of its kind in the country today.

An integral component of this system is CREBA's cutting-edge Geographic Information System (GIS) parcellary mapping, uniquely designed not only for the speedy technical analysis of land titles, but also as a potent tool in evaluating the investment and developmental potentials of any land parcel anywhere in the country.

With it's digital database of official land records and maps, land information and town profiles, the CREBALAND GIS is so far also the only one of its kind in this country in terms of its comprehensive, nationwide scope and parcellary mapping/projection capabilities.

Together, these systems enable anyone claiming ownership of a piece of land to fully satisfy the fundamental jurisprudential requirements of (1) proving the identity and origin of his claimed land with absolute certainty, and (2) proving the strength and legitimacy of his ownership claim.

Through a microscope

A title applied for a CREBALAND Title Warranty is subjected to a most rigorous and exhaustive set of examination, research, verification, investigation and analysis processes which were so designed as to render it ***virtually impossible*** for any title defect or signs of fraud or spuriousness to ***escape detection***. These processes include, among others:

- A physical ***genuineness test*** of the judicial form used for the title certificate;
- An identity check of the registered owner or warranty applicant;
- An ***extensive historical research*** – from the original registration down to the latest transfer certificate – into all the records and documents pertaining to the successive surveys, registrations, transfers, reconstitution if any, realty tax records, annotated encumbrances, and all pertinent official land records;
- An ***exhaustive technical analysis*** of all the technical records/documents, matched against the official maps and land records, to determine the accuracy of the land's descriptions and trace its true origin, utilizing the CREBALAND GIS; and
- ***Comprehensive legal and historical analyses*** of all the pertinent records and documents to determine, among others, regularity of official signatures and compliance with land disposition, surveying, titling and transfer procedures and requirements under various laws.

With these processes, a tampered certificate of title, or a record inserted into the files of the Register of Deeds through "saksak-bunot," or a fraudulent entry in the official registries, or a "doctored" survey plan, or a fictitious or legally flawed transfer, or impersonation, and a host of other irregularities that may impact on the validity of the title, will invariably be ***exposed*** when each record is analyzed and matched with every other record obtained from all the agencies concerned.

A title that hurdles all these processes is issued a Title Warranty Certificate attesting to the integrity and reliability of the title.

Lifetime assurance

The "title defense covenant" inscribed in each Warranty Certificate, which no other entity in this country so far offers, expresses CREBALAND's full faith in the thoroughness and accuracy of its processes and its certainty as to its findings about a title.

Thus, with a Title Warranty, investors, buyers and lenders are assured of protection against fake, fraudulent or materially defective titles, even as they are placed in a better position to make wiser investment decisions from the comprehensive information provided by CREBALAND about the land, the locality and the title.

In the case of banks and lending institutions, the Title Warranty would considerably enhance their asset quality by affording risk-free collaterals, even as it would minimize if not preclude collusion between loan applicants and appraisers or credit investigators. With reduced risks, banks may then prevail upon the BSP to reduce the percentage requirement for loss provision which cuts into a bank's liquidity.

Prospective borrowers using a warranted title as collateral would enjoy a higher credit rating, lesser documentary requirements, speedier loan processing and, more importantly, would have the means to negotiate for higher loan value and lower interest rate.

On the other hand, landowners armed with a CREBALAND Title Warranty are assured of:

- peace of mind and protection against land grabbers flaunting fake titles;
- security against tampering of their title records, as through the research/ verification process certified copies of all available title records are obtained and preserved by CREBALAND;
- effective defense in case of litigation or land conflicts; and
- enhanced marketability and increased investment/collateral value of their land.

How much does an independently authenticated title cost?

Affordability-wise, when one measures the substantial increments in investment value and marketability that a warranted title derives, the cost of obtaining a title warranty pales into insignificance.

Consider a 2,000-sq.m. land with a zonal value of P8,000 per square meter, located in a fake titles "hot spot" such as Antipolo. Without a title warranty, a broker could demand anywhere from 7% to 12% to market the property; and at that, the highest bid price could be no more than P7,000 per square meter.

With a title warranty costing just fifty pesos (P50.00) per square meter in this case, the property owner could jack up the selling price to as much as P8,300 per square meter, and still would have no difficulty marketing it.

For a 5-hectare land in an urban area, with a zonal value of P4,000 per square meter, the warranty cost would be only **seven pesos** (P7.00) per square meter. For a 50-hectare agricultural land with a zonal value of P150 per square meter, it would be only **forty-five centavos** (P0.45) per square meter.

Compare these with the cost of a full coverage car insurance that is good for only a year (what's a car compared to one's land?), or to a broker's commission that ranges from 5% to 12% of selling price.

Clearly, affordability should be a non-issue to one who knows the true value of an impregnable title to land.

CREBALAND Geographic Information System (GIS)

Parcellary Mapping & Projection Analysis at its Best

The Land & its Attributes. The Title & its Origins.

It is a truism that the investment and collateral value of any given land is determined not only by a set of factors indicating the land's developmental and investment potentials, but also by the quality and integrity of the title.

The traditional way of collecting information about a land in any given area has been to go from one government office to another, which under normal circumstances could take months and entail considerable expense. After which the interested party goes about verifying the title; a daunting task which, unless he is fully equipped, could result in an investment debacle.

The world-class CREBALAND geographic information system (GIS) Parcellary Mapping was built specifically to answer the two fundamental questions in the mind of a potential investor:

1. Is the land bankable?
2. Is the title reliable?

Using global standard geo-referencing technology and official mapping reference points, and drawing from its very own power-packed digital database of official land information covering the whole country, the CREBALAND GIS answers these questions in a breeze.

More than just being the most comprehensive digital repository of geo-physical and spatial information in the country today, the uniqueness of the CREBALAND GIS arises from its capability to accurately analyze the technical integrity of the title for any land parcel anywhere in the country.

A land title may contain the following technical errors, which under existing jurisprudence would seriously impair – if not totally vitiate or invalidate – the ownership claim:

- ***Locational error*** – such as when the land is actually located in a place different from what the title states, or when it cannot be located at all. A seller or loan applicant may show you a land, but it may not be the same land covered by the title.
- ***Boundary error*** – such as, for instance, when the title describes the land as being bounded by a national road or a river when in fact it is not, or when it straddles part of inalienable land.
- ***Closure error*** – which, in layman's terms, simply means a gap between the land parcel's corners or points. This gap means that the land's bounding lines do not close to form a polygon, such that when you fence it based on the description, you end up with a gap in the fence.
- ***Overlap, encroachment or duplicate title/claim*** – such as when plotted or mapped, the titled land is shown to be straddling another property, or covered by another claim or title.
- ***Inconsistency*** with the reference survey plans, and/or predecessor titles, and/or official land records/maps.
- ***Indeterminate origin of the land*** – such as when the land described in the latest certificate of title cannot be traced to its predecessors.

One would not be able to tell whether a title contains these errors just by reading it, or even by an ocular inspection of the land itself.

Traditionally, accurately detecting these errors required an actual ground survey using geodetic engineering equipment. The results of the survey were then drawn (or plotted) either manually, or through computer-aided design (CAD) software introduced locally some 25 years ago.

Even as this process is as time-consuming as it is costly, it is wholly insufficient to determine technical consistency among all titling records as against official maps, unless advanced mapping software is used in conjunction with ***geo-referenced*** official data.

Enter the CREBALAND GIS. With fully computerized operations, CREBALAND easily and speedily generates various dynamic, information-packed parcellary maps, vicinity and town maps, and three-dimensional (3D) thematic maps, graphically showing the following:

1. The land parcel (or parcels) described in the title (or titles) – the lot data; exact configuration and bounding lines; exact boundaries; exact location in the town/barangay map; locational, boundary and/or closure errors; and even GPS coordinates to aid in site visit.
2. The technical relationships among all the certificates of title in the entire chain, in relation to official maps and other technical records.
3. Parcellary data on the economic or developmental potentials of the land, such as:
    - Slope, elevation and lithology
    - Land use classification per approved LGU land use map
    - Agricultural land use category per SAFDZ map
    - Distance from town center
    - BIR zonal classification and zonal value
4. Vicinity and town data, such as:
    - Comprehensive road network
    - Network of water bodies
    - Landmarks, economic zones, banks, tourist areas, airports
    - Fault lines
    - Utilities in the area (power franchises, water franchises, telephone carriers)
    - Barangay/town population and income class

Clearly, the CREBALAND systems are yet to be matched in this country today, and for which CREBALAND undoubtedly deserves its epithet: The Land Experts.

Convergence – powering the land sector's leap into the future

It may be said that with the CREBALAND Title Warranty and GIS Parcellary Mapping systems, the CREBA Internet Portal and CREBALAND's various technology-packed services, CREBA has finally achieved full convergence, with ICT (information and communications technology) fully powering the various disciplines in the land sector – geosciences, land registration and titling, law, appraisal/valuation, development planning, global marketing, and a host of others.

With this convergence, the Philippine land sector is now fully armed to take the economy along in its evolutionary leap into the future.

In particular, the Title Warranty and GIS Parcellary Mapping – the first private sector undertakings of their kind on such comprehensive and nationwide scale in this country – were specifically and uniquely crafted to provide the land sector with the means to pursue the prerequisites to investment decision-making and land development in the most accurate, efficient, effective, speedy, and reliable manner.

Beyond pecuniary considerations is the considerable public or national interest that permeates these ventures, in terms of their vast potentials to significantly contribute to national progress, by triggering an expanded level and faster pace of land development and domestic/foreign investment activity at both local and national levels.

And in these ventures the public is assured of world-class standards of professional service, backed by CREBA's 34-year old reputation and prestige in the service of the industry, the economy and the nation.

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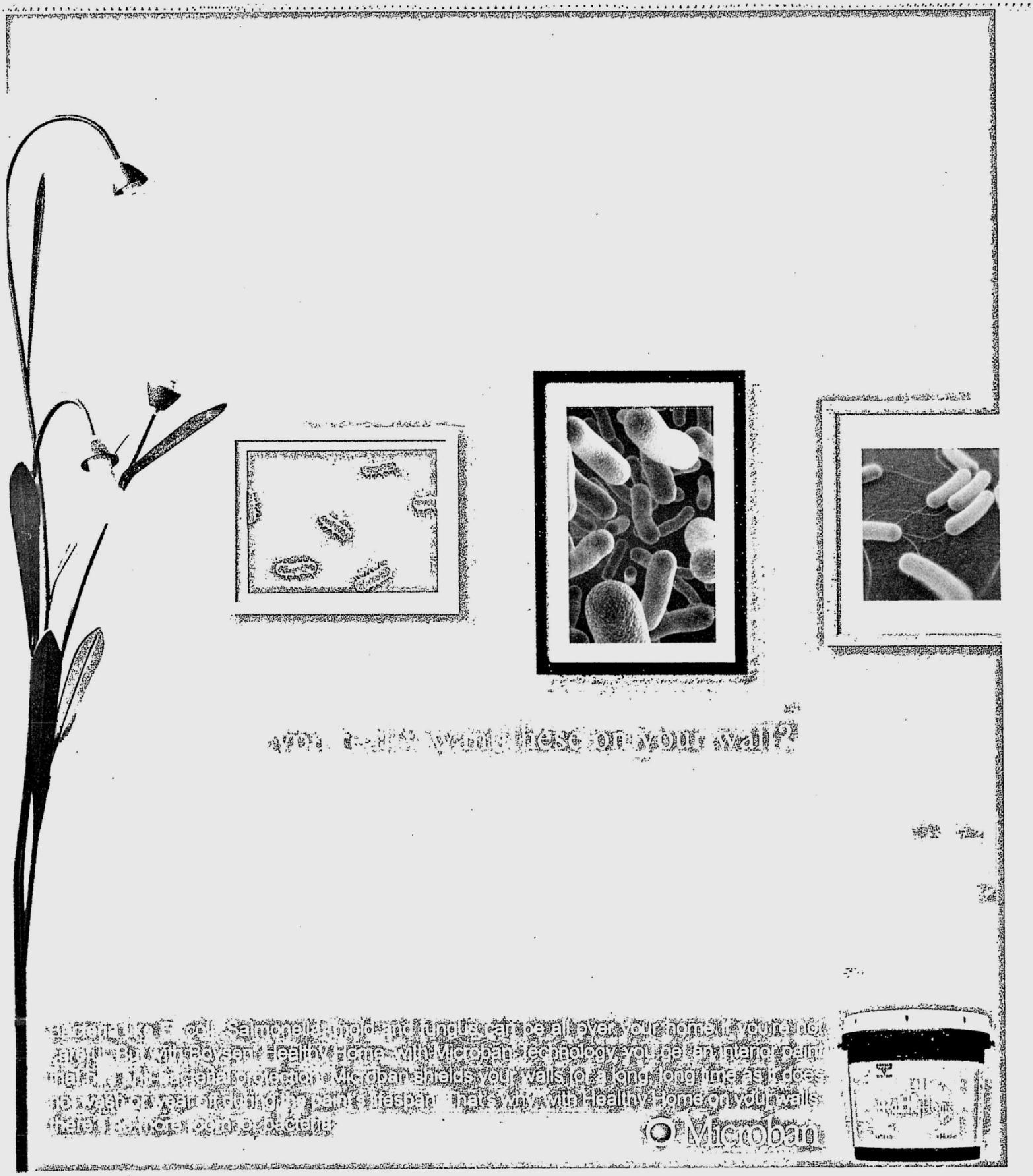
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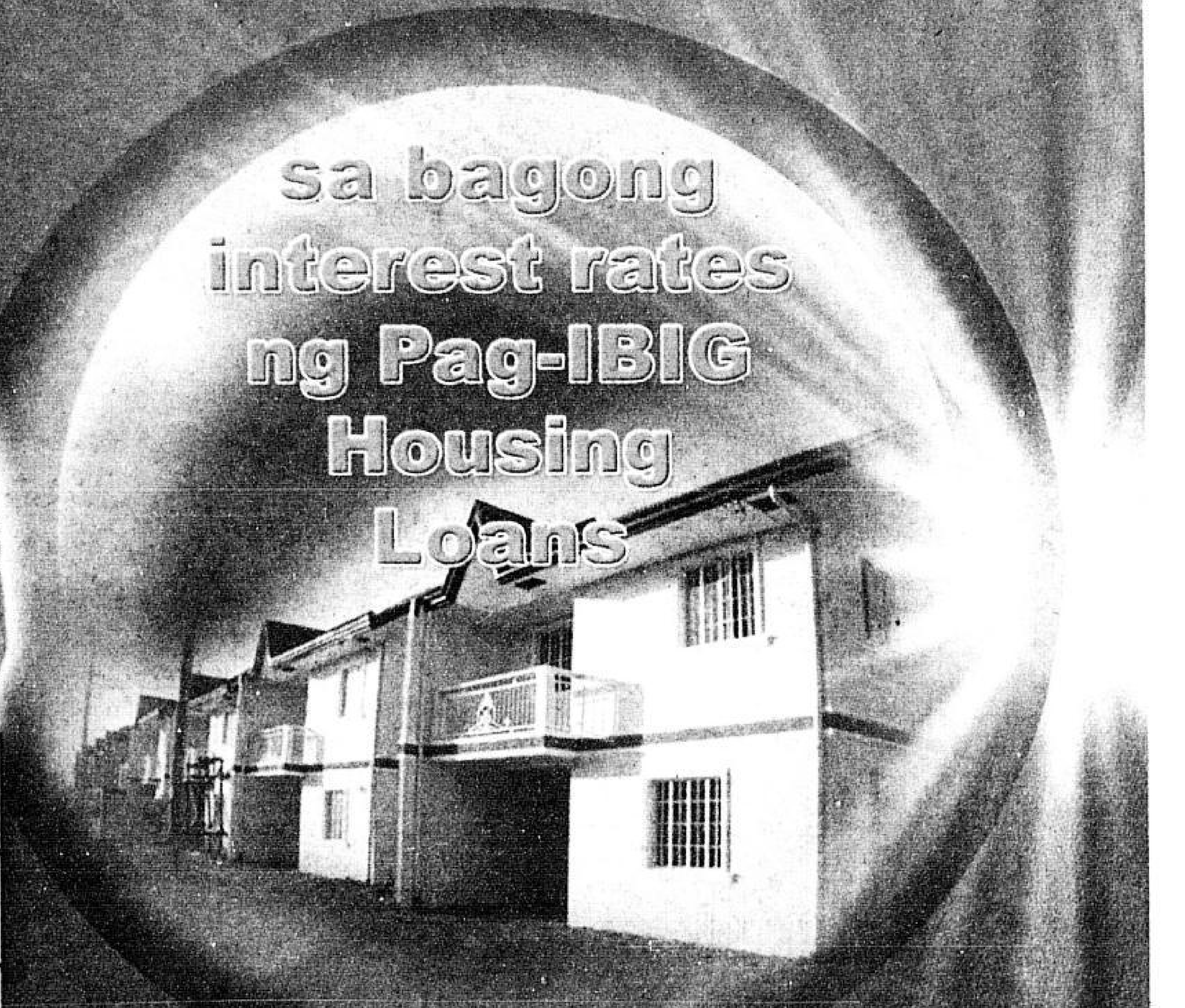

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